







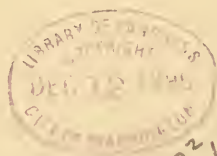
# SIX STORIES

AND SOME VERSES



BY

ROBERT BEVERLY HALE



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# ORDER OF CONTENTS



Note	
My Brother	I
A Philosopher with an Eye for Beauty	3
Harmony	43
Too Much of a Bad Thing	45
Francis Parkman	74
The Two Sides of a Promise	75
Sixteen	105
Antaeus in Love	107
The Chase	133
A Middle-Aged Woman	135
Stars	158
Untaught by Experience	159
A Brick Block	190



The poem "My Brother," which might well have been written of him, was written by himself on a brother who died in childhood.



## NOTE

Robert Beverly Hale died on the 6th of October, 1895. Few men have been loved as he was loved, in a very wide circle of friends. And such love was well deserved. It is to meet the wish of very dear friends, whom he loved very dearly, that this volume is published.

He was born in Milton, Massachusetts, September 5th, 1869. When he was but a few weeks old, the family removed to Roxbury, a part of Boston, and this was his home through his life. He passed through the regular courses of the Roxbury Latin School and of Harvard College, and graduated with credit at Cambridge in 1892.

He was a general favorite, and so soon as he left college various attractive proposals were made to him by older friends who hoped to secure his intelligent and cordial service, as a teacher, as a director of philanthropic work, as an editor, or in other ways. But he had already determined to devote his life to authorship or literature. With him, a careful resolution was a determination; it meant something unchangeable. He immediately planned out a course of systematic study for his purpose,—a course such as the limitations of college life hardly permit; and to that course he devoted himself as steadily as if he had been at the call of a college bell.

At the same time, and with the same steadfastness, he assigned to himself duties in what is called charity, in the relief of the lonely, in help of the ignorant, and in citizenship. Best of all, he gave the light and joy to a happy home.

As early as 1892 he began to send to editors such work as he thought worthy of print, in verse or in prose. In the autumn of 1894 he published a volume of poems, under the name "Elsie and Other Poems." His articles were received more and more favorably, by critics and by the public, and before he died it was clear that he had not mistaken his career.

A few of his prose papers, and seven of his poems which were not in the volume published in 1894, make up the collection in the reader's hands.

People who did not know him will differ as to the literary merits of these pieces. People who knew him will be glad to recognize the traces of his thoughtful observation, of his good-natured humor, and of his love of all sorts and conditions of men. It is not for people who simply liked what he wrote that the book is published. It is dedicated to all that large circle who loved him for what he was.

EDWARD E. HALE.

Acknowledgment is due to the editors of "The New England Magazine," of "The Atlantic Monthly," of "Harper's Weekly," and of "The Youths' Companion" for the courtesy in allowing the reprint of stories or poems which appeared in these magazines.

## MY BROTHER

If in my heart I mourn that he is sleeping;  
If I forget that he is in Your keeping;  
You will forgive my senseless, selfish weeping,  
Fighting against Your will!

Yes, I have asked, and You have said me nay:  
You would not let him live another day:  
Yes, You have given, and now You take away:  
Father, I bless You still.

O Father dear! I think that it would cheer him,  
If when I die I might be somewhere near him:  
May I not be where I can see and hear him,  
Waiting upon him still?

Father, I do not wonder You should choose him,  
That in Your work You somewhere need to use  
him;

I am content—almost content—to lose him:  
Yes, for it is Your will.



AMY







## A PHILOSOPHER WITH AN EYE FOR BEAUTY



Arthur Sands stood in the drawing-room and waited for Miss Amy Lunt to come down and receive him. His cheviot shirt and gaiters suggested that he had ridden over to the Lunts' on either a horse or a bicycle; his erect carriage settled the matter in favor of the nobler animal. He was not an Apollo, but he had as much beauty as one expects of a man; and though a closely cut beard covered the lower part of his face, the lines of his chin showed through sufficiently to prove that the covering was designed for an ornament, not for a screen. Taken all in all, he was not the sort of man that most young women would have kept waiting for twenty minutes. But Sands had watched the minute-hand of the clock move over more than a third of its monotonous race-track before he heard on the stairs the quick patter that he was waiting for, and it was perhaps five seconds later when Amy danced into the room with a step as light as Ellen Douglas's, though far less dignified. "The sweetest girl in the world, and the last I should want to marry," had been Sands's description of her the night before.

She saw in one instant that he was irritated, and in the next how to allay his irritation. She stopped in front of him, pouting, and would not shake hands.

"I had on my brown dress, and I knew you didn't like it, so I changed it for this green one that you used to like, and now—and now"—

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

Arthur's injured pride was turned in a moment to humble pleas for pardon. This was precisely what "the sweetest girl in the world" wanted, and having converted him, by the magic of one little lie, from an injured sovereign to an erring vassal, she gradually allowed him to assume a position of something like equality.

"A philosopher with an eye for beauty" Arthur's most intimate friend had called him. An eye for beauty! It is a peculiarity that is apt to accompany great minds. You may be sure it was not Xanthippe's amiability which led the wisest man in the world to marry her. A philosopher with an eye for beauty sitting on a sofa with the sweetest girl in the world, and the last that the philosopher would want to marry! Good heavens! what can be done before it is too late?

Before Miss Lunt sat down with the philosopher, she stood for a moment looking out of the oriel window at the sunset. She was sensitive to beauty of all kinds, and as she gazed at the white stretch of snow and the pillar-like elms and the clear glow lighting up the winter sky behind, a serious look crossed her girlish face, a look which was all the more fascinating because it was so rare. The next minute she had danced across the room and was beside her visitor on the sofa.

They talked of people, then of other people, then of still other people; and then, strange to say, of books. Miss Lunt had an object in introducing this unusual topic; she generally had an object in what she said.

"I don't like Meredith," she remarked; "he's too hard to understand. But why do I talk to you of such things? You look on me as a perfect fool, a mere plaything, that it's fun to talk to just so as to hear what she'll say!"

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

Like Mademoiselle Bernhardt and other great actresses, Miss Amy Lunt had real tears ready at a moment's notice, and she also resembled them in that she felt her pretended emotions almost as much as if they had been real.

"I don't think you're a fool at all," Sands said, laying his hand on her arm. "I think you're the sweetest girl in the world!"

"And the last that you'd want to marry!" Amy said. Oh, how fast epigrams fly! She buried her face in her hands, and sobbed like a little girl.

It was a critical moment, and Amy knew it. Either he would put his arm round her and tell her that he did want to marry her, or else he would not. As a matter of fact, he did.

"Why, the man's a fool!" I think I hear the reader say, flinging down my poor story in disgust. What's the matter, reader? Do you want all the people you read about to be sensible? No? Only the heroes? A sensible hero! My dear reader, I really cannot waste time talking to you.

The Sandses were one of the oldest families in the world. They traced their descent from several persons of eminence: from William Penn, from Roger Sherman, from King Egbert, and through the kings of Wales to a celebrated Hebrew whose genealogy joins right on where the Bible leaves off. So if the grand old gardener and his wife wanted to smile at the Sandses' ancestors, they were reduced to the humiliating occupation of smiling at themselves. Arthur's father and mother lived on Locust Street, in an orthodox Philadelphia house, red brick, with white doorsteps, door, shutters, and window-sill; only their house was twice as broad as its neighbors, and had two windows on each side

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

of the front door. Mr. Sands had inherited a fortune from his father, and had invested it all in Pennsylvania Railroad stock. Can anything be conceived of more respectable, more honorable, than the facts I have mentioned? Some envious cavilers, whose grandfathers were probably fishmongers, pointed out that none of the Sandses had ever been known to do anything. But, as Arthur's father observed, what was there for them to do? You might as well find fault with the man who stands on the summit of Everest because he doesn't climb.

The Sandses were naturally irritated that the future head of their family should become engaged to a person named Lunt. The Lunts were not descended from any one; at least so Mr. Sands said, though such a statement would be difficult to believe on any less trustworthy authority. After a bitter mental struggle, Mrs. Sands (who had been a MacSparen) put her pride in her pocket, and asked Miss Lunt to spend a week in Philadelphia. Amy went, and had a very gay time. As she was staying with Mrs. Sands, and was engaged to Arthur, she was asked everywhere. She would have been, as Charlie Peters observed, even if her name, instead of being Amy Lunt, had been Lucy Fur. But Mrs. Sands's arctic politeness and the constant effort of always behaving a little better than came natural made Amy glad to get back to Hartford again, where every one did not have quite so many ancestors, and where Mr. Lunt was not in the least looked down upon because his occupation chanced to be that of selling boots.

Arthur, as we have seen, had no especial reason for asking Amy to marry him, unless the fact that a woman is pretty and happens to be

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

crying in your arms can be considered to constitute a sufficient reason for inviting her to be your wife. Miss Amy, on the other hand, had a great many reasons for wishing to marry Arthur. In the first place, he had a grand way about him, which he probably had inherited from King Egbert, or possibly from Abraham, and which had the effect of making all the other men in the neighborhood look small. Then he was good; and Amy had seen enough of the world to know that, next to distinction, goodness is the best quality to have in a husband. Then he was rich; and I hope no one will think the worse of my heroine because she did not object to that. He was clever, too, though it was Amy's opinion that he possessed just enough weak points for a skilful wife to guide him as she liked. He was big and strong, and what woman does not like to have a husband who can knock people down? Not that the accomplishment is of much practical value, but it is nice to know that he can. Arthur belonged to one of the best families in Philadelphia, too, and although blood was not one of Amy's hobbies, she was far from undervaluing it. But these were all general reasons. What really brought Amy to the point was the fact that she found herself practically engaged to two young men at the same time, and discovered that the simplest way out of her difficulty was to marry a third.

The engagement was not a long one. "Periculum in mora," and Amy did not want to lose Arthur. She took advantage of some of his nonsense about how he wished he could be married to-morrow, and named an early day, so that the whole engagement did not last two months. There was a grand wedding in the Centre Church, and Mr. Lunt had his annual shop-worn sale a

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

month earlier than usual, so as to meet the extraordinary expense. He confessed that he spent more than he could afford, to prove to the Quakers that Philadelphia was not the only place in the world. But as Mr. and Mrs. Sands were the only Philadelphians who took the trouble to come, and as both of them were hopelessly convinced of the truth of the theory he wished to disprove, he felt that a large part of his outlay had been wasted. However, his daughter was married, and that was one reason why he had spent the money.

As to the two young men to whom Amy had previously plighted herself, they took different courses. I need hardly mention that they both sent her ruinously magnificent presents; that form of biting revenge is, I believe, always resorted to under the circumstances. If they imagined Amy's false heart to be chilled to remorse by these posthumous offerings of affection, they were egregiously deceived. If she ever thought of Franklin McElroy while using his beautiful silver breakfast service, it was only to reflect that she had got out of a bad scrape extremely well. And John Johns's great Dutch clock could never tick any self-condemnation into the place where Amy's heart ought to have been. McElroy afterwards married his typewriter, and never ate his breakfast without inwardly cursing his folly when he saw his wife pouring out his coffee from a copper coffee-pot. Johns married an elderly widow, whose charms were the more permanent as they were chiefly pecuniary. To return to Amy's wedding, McElroy was present, and even went so far as to kiss the bride, who naively observed in a whisper that it wasn't the first time. Johns, a wiser man than his colleague in misery, stayed away.

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

It seems to be a generally accepted theory that a story in which the hero and heroine die immediately after their marriage is a tragedy. I feel that even the reader, for whose mental powers, though I have recently taken occasion to slight them, I really have a high regard, is of this opinion. But did it ever strike the reader what sort of a married life Hernani and Dona Sol would have passed, or how Romeo and Juliet would have fared at breakfast, that criterion of conjugal happiness? Does Romeo's behavior toward Rosaline (very likely a nicer girl than Juliet) augur well for his constancy towards Mrs. Montague (born Capulet)? Can you imagine greater torments than those which the romantic mountain ranger Hernani would have endured if condemned to a lifelong sentence of fine clothes, blank verse, and a faultless wife? Before you accuse a story of ending badly, just think how it might have ended if it had not ended as it did. Given two such creatures as Romeo and Juliet, I think Shakespeare did remarkably well.

As fortune, good or bad, would have it, Arthur Sands and his wife did not meet with violent deaths shortly after their marriage. When their wedding journey was over, they came back to Hartford, and took up their quarters in the large house in Prospect Street which Arthur had purchased some months before. Like a man who, merely because he felt like jumping, has leaped an abyss so wide that he finds himself unable to recross it, Arthur was now in an excellent position to contemplate the advantages of the ground he had just left.

There are three stages of love, through which some persons pass, and some do not. The first is just love, pure and simple; the second is love returned, or engaged love; and the third is le-

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

gally permanent, or married love. Fortunately, most people are more in love after they are engaged than they were before their engagement, and still more in love when they are married, —at least for a while; so much so that those of their friends who are sensible avoid them for a time. But as Arthur and Amy had never, strictly speaking, been in love at all, their love could not grow any more than zero can grow, no matter how many times you keep multiplying it. Arthur kept multiplying his love for Amy by all sorts of things, good resolutions, prayers, thoughts about her beauty, kisses, everything you can think of, and it stayed just the same; that is to say, it was non-existent. It was a pity that it did not amount to something at first; even a very small fraction would have been sufficient. It is wonderful how large a little bit of a fraction will grow, if you only multiply it enough.

As to Amy, I cannot exactly tell you what she was thinking about. I can tell you just what she did, and that will have to suffice. You see she was a very peculiar person, and her motives and aims were so utterly astounding and so involved that even if I could unravel them, I doubt if the reader could comprehend them. Amy had her wooden bowl at last; but the trouble with wooden bowls is that there are very few uses to which they can be put. They have a disagreeable way, too, of being split here and there; and often you find the workmanship very rough and incomplete, when you get the bowl into your possession and can examine it closely. And when you are pretty well out of conceit with it, you catch sight of another wooden bowl,—such a lovely one; and although it is on an upper shelf, so that you cannot see it very well, yet you are confident that this one is exquisite in

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

design and perfect in execution; then you get chairs and boxes and step-ladders, and you climb and climb, and either you get it or you don't; but in either case, the first wooden bowl is relegated to its uses as a bowl, and, while it sometimes proves serviceable, it never calls forth any more enthusiasm on your part, though sometimes the neighbors admire it.

Arthur Sands was an intellectual man, and was extremely fond of reading. He possessed that aristocratic literary taste which leads some men to prefer honestly the books which the majority of mankind has agreed in preferring. He was continually reading the English classics. He liked Mr. Richard Harding Davis well enough, but he preferred Shakespeare. Before his marriage he spent a large part of his leisure time in reading; and one of the things he was proud of in Amy was her fondness for books. He looked forward to passing many happy evenings with her, in front of a blazing fire, reading Scott or Hawthorne aloud. Amy encouraged him in this vision of mild pleasure, though she had but little expectation of ever seeing it realized.

Amy liked to read, too; but Shakespeare and Milton and Scott had no charm for her. She had even graduated from Thackeray, or thought she had. In common with many other persons, she had somehow acquired the sensation of having read all the standard books without really ever having been through the tedious process of reading them. She had said so many times that she had read *Paradise Lost* that she felt just about as if she had. But to any one who knew her well—Arthur did not, at the time of his marriage—the idea of Amy Lunt sitting down to read Milton, or Carlyle, or Macaulay, or Matthew Arnold, or Green, or even Washington Irving, was

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

too absurd to be taken seriously. The truth is, she had never read ten pages of any one of those authors. She liked Shelley, and had read a little of Keats; but Swinburne was the poet that she doted upon. The swooning luxuriousness of his verse enchanted her, and his utterly perverted moral standard was a sauce which seasoned long pages of verses which would otherwise have contained little to interest her. Edgar Allan Poe was the only American author that she cared for. She read principally in French, and books which Arthur would not have allowed in his house before his marriage were strewn freely about his tables after it. The truth was, Amy liked an author with a highly stimulated imagination; and if it happened to be diseased, why, so much the better.

“Now what shall we read?” said Arthur cheerfully, as he and his wife sat in front of the fire, the second evening after their return from their wedding journey. “Jane Austen, or George Eliot, or The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table?”

“I don’t care, Arthur,—anything. I feel rather tired to-night.”

“My poor child! But it will rest you to hear a little reading. I’ll tell you: I’ll pick out something and begin to read it, and then you can guess what it is.”

He went to a bookcase, took down a book, opened it, and began to read:—

“‘With a single drop of ink for a mirror, the Egyptian sorcerer undertakes to reveal to any chance comer far-reaching visions of the past. This is what I undertake to do for you, reader. With this drop of ink at the end of my pen I will show you the roomy workshop of Mr. Jonathan Burge, carpenter and builder in the vil-

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

lage of Hayslope'—Now you know," Arthur said, interrupting himself. "Of course the 'Hayslope' would give it away, even if you hadn't remembered Jonathan Burge. Didn't you always feel sorry for Mary Burge? Adam was so disagreeable to her."

"Yes, he was horrid," Amy said, wondering what the book could be. Then she boldly observed, "Adam was a pretty mean fellow, anyway, I think."

Arthur looked at her to see if she was joking. "You don't really mean that, do you, Amy?" he inquired.

"No, of course I didn't," Amy rejoined hurriedly. "Go ahead, Arthur."

Arthur read very well, and was, naturally, a little proud of the unusual accomplishment. When he finished the first chapter, he paused for a moment for Amy to say how much she liked the book, and also, perhaps, how well she thought he read.

"That's the stupidest stuff I ever heard," she said, yawning.

Arthur bit his lip; but he was a person who seldom lost his self-control,—not often enough, perhaps.

"You're tired, Amy," he said, rising, and stroking her hair. "You ought to go to bed, dear. We can go on with the book to-morrow night."

"Oh no, I'm not especially tired," Amy replied coolly. "I'm only bored with that book. I'll tell you what we'll do. You sit and read that, and I'll run upstairs and get *Une Femme*. Then we'll both be happy."

Again Arthur kept his temper. "Very well," he replied, and, returning to his seat, he began to read to himself. Amy brought her novel downstairs, and there for a couple of hours they sat;

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

Arthur reading a book describing the manliest of men, Amy a work whose title should have been *A Woman, Little as You Might Think It*.

And so ended the reading aloud that poor Arthur had imagined as one of the pleasantest parts of his married life. Hundreds of stories, poems, plays, and histories, all narrowed down in an instant to one short chapter in a novel! "The way of the world," Arthur said bitterly to himself. He was perfectly right. It is the way of the world that if you marry a woman who does not like reading aloud, you must read by yourself. There were plenty of women in Hartford who liked reading aloud. Why did not Arthur marry one of them?

There are some marriages in which the man and the woman seem perfectly suited to each other, the virtues of the one successfully balancing the faults of the other; enough similarity to make life pleasant, enough divergence to make it interesting, enough love and trust to utterly snow under any misunderstanding that may arise. These are the marriages which have suggested to an optimistic world that matches are made in heaven. There are other matches which would seem to have been arranged in a very different locality. There are cases where it would seem to a man's friends that he has deliberately united himself to the most unsuitable helpmate that could possibly be found; that he would have done far better if he had gone to a dance and asked the first girl who came downstairs to marry him. Perhaps he would have done better, but probably not. In the first place we must remember that a man cannot choose a wife from among all the girls he knows, but only from among such as will have him; that narrows most of us down to an absurd degree. Secondly, there are influ-

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

ences constantly at work in married life to bring out the hidden differences in two natures. Your friend might not get on so well with that first girl who came downstairs, after all. To look at them and hear them talk, you would think they were well suited to each other. They are both tall and handsome, and they are talking enthusiastically about skating. Yet she detests smoking, and will not have it in the house; and he must have his three cigars a day, and certainly will not pull his easy-chair outdoors to smoke them. She is an ardent prophet of woman's rights, and he has brought his fist down on the table and sworn that HIS wife, at least, shall never vote. Imagine him, with a cigar in his mouth, telling her to stay at home when she wants to go to a rally!

Arthur Sands, then, might have done worse. I happen to know the disagreeable things that occurred in his married life; but worse things might have occurred if he had married some one else. Yet Arthur was a fine man in his way, and I cannot help thinking that there are women in the world who could have made him happy. Years before he married Amy, he had asked another woman to marry him. She might have made him a better wife, but she refused him, while Amy, as we have seen, accepted him a little before she was asked. The trouble with the marriage of Amy and Arthur was that the qualities in her which had induced him to propose—so far as his proposal was voluntary—were not those which he cared anything about after they were married. Chief among them was beauty; but beauty may change to ugliness when we know the key to a face, just as ugliness may change to beauty. So soon as we have seen a beautiful face with an evil expression upon it,

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

we do not care so much about looking at it. If we see such an expression often, the face becomes hateful to us. The mouth, however it may smile, looks cruel, the nose proud, the eyes deceitful. An ugly face lighted up by goodness is good enough for me; and many a man will come home to-night and kiss such a face, and thank God that some haughty beauty refused him; and after supper he will sit in front of the fire, and watch the dear old eyes, and the dear turned-up nose, and the good generous mouth, with a very different feeling from that with which Arthur watched Amy. For beauty is not in itself a virtue, but only an ornament to virtue. Snakes are beautiful, but people don't like to look at them. They are graceful, but people don't like to watch their motions, except when they are going away. Almost any one would prefer to look at a toad, which, though ugly, has no disagreeable characteristics, except the unproved and certainly involuntary fault of giving people warts. Beauty, like illustrious lineage, makes nobility nobler, but it goes about as far towards improving wickedness or incompetency as a bright sun and a blue sky go towards making the day on which you have lost your mother seem agreeable.

Arthur was a religious man; not one of those who obtrude Scriptural texts and spiritual admonitions into his conversation, but one who prayed every night on his knees, and a good deal on his feet in the daytime; one who went to church every Sunday and made good resolutions, and who carried them out pretty conscientiously during the week; one who did not groan when he heard a man swear, and who could pound out an oath or two himself when it was absolutely necessary, but who had the

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

accomplishment of making slanderers feel uncomfortable, and who came down like a falling house on mean or dirty conversation. He never appeared to better advantage than when he lost his temper; and as I have already hinted, it was a pity he lost it so seldom. Religion meant a great deal to him: it had determined his decision in every important crisis of his life except his marriage, which, as we have seen, may be considered, like a thunderstorm or an earthquake, as a phenomenon of nature, something beyond his control.

As to Amy's religious views, they are worth dwelling on, because I conceive them to be very similar to those of a great many young ladies of the present day. Without ever having taken the trouble to investigate the doctrines of any religious belief, she pronounced them all to be absurd. Now there is no fault to be found with a man who has sounded every faith to its depths, and who, dissatisfied with all, becomes a free-thinker. He may be unfortunate, but he does not appear to be in fault. Amy, however, having sounded nothing except a trumpet of defiance to all recognized faiths, became what may be termed a free non-thinker. The curious part of it was that she had a vague feeling of superiority to those who, like Arthur, belonged to some established order of religious belief. It is a very noticeable fact that Colonel Ingersoll, Professor Huxley, and others who attack the inspiration of the Bible are more familiar with the book than many of those who hold it in higher honor than they. Amy knew nothing about the Bible, except that she did not believe in it.

"Aren't you coming to church with me?" Arthur said, one Sunday morning. "You haven't a headache, or cold, or anything. No excuse. Come on, Amy!"

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

Amy thought the struggle might as well take place now as at any time.

"No, I don't believe I'll come," she said languidly. "And to tell you the truth, Arthur, I don't intend to do much going to church, ever. It doesn't do me a bit of good; it does me harm to hear a man say a lot of stuff with impunity, when I could shut him up easily enough if he'd only let me answer him. I don't object to other people's going, if they want to; but as for me, it does me lots more good to sit at home and read some serious book that makes me think."

Arthur looked at the book in her hand. It was a volume of short stories by Guy de Maupassant. He left the room without speaking.

The Sandeses had preserved the old Quaker custom of having a silent grace at meals. Arthur, who had been accustomed to it ever since he was a baby, tried to introduce it into his own household; but after a few weeks of endurance Amy's patience gave out.

"Come Arthur," she said, "you can keep quiet all you want, but I'm not going to sit like Patience on a something or other, just because you happen to be thanking God! It seems to me the worst of all times to thank him, anyway, before you know whether the dinner's going to be good or not!"

The silent grace was discontinued.

Arthur was sadly disappointed because his wife proved to be utterly without religion of any kind; but he had no real right to his sense of injury. She was not a sham; she had not secured him by false pretenses. He married her because she was pretty and charming; and she certainly was both. He did not find out, after they were married, that her hair was false or that her face was enameled; she could be just as merry and

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

winning after their marriage as she was before. The trouble was in him. He suddenly changed his standards. Before marriage he cared for nothing but beauty and charm; afterwards he gave no thought to those qualities, but was all for intellect and religion, and because Amy did not possess those peculiarities he was disappointed in her. But she had never pretended to be wise or religious. He was like a man who purchases an English thoroughbred because it is handsome and has magnificent paces; and after bringing it home, becomes accustomed to its beauty and grace, but feels indignant with it because it cannot haul stones or work at the plough, and wishes he had bought a cart-horse. There are all sorts of horses, and all sorts of women; and people ought to get the kind they want.

One of the problems which young married people have to face is the question of how much they shall go into society. Shall they go out to dinner three nights in a week, and go out immediately after dinner the four other nights? Or shall they stay quietly at home six nights, and go to the theatre the seventh? If they are very fond of each other, they generally like staying at home; if they are not, they like to go where they can see some one else.

It soon proved that Arthur, who, though he never, strictly speaking, loved Amy, yet had a very respectable imitation of love for her, preferred to stay at home, while Amy wanted to go out as often as possible. Now, though Arthur had a much stronger character than his wife, it was very noticeable that, in their disputes, she almost invariably got her way. The truth was that Arthur was so heavily handicapped that he had no chance. He had to consider not only

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

what he wanted, but how far he could go on his side of the argument without bringing on some sort of rupture between Amy and himself. Amy, on the other hand, thought of nothing but what she wanted, and depended entirely on him to guard against ruptures. He was the stouter swordsman, but she fought with a rapier, while he was obliged to use a foil with a button on the end. Buttons sometimes come off, though, and then—one, two, three! a long carte thrust, and half a foot of crimsoned steel shows well enough whose wrist is the stronger.

As yet, however, the button was securely fastened to Arthur's foil.

"Why, Arthur, aren't you dressed yet? Didn't you know we'd accepted for the Trimbles' dance?"

"Oh, Amy, have we got to go out to-night? Why, we were at the Danverses' last night, and the Winthrops' the night before; and to-morrow night, you know, we've got tickets for Julia Marlowe. Do let's stay in one evening in the week!"

"Now, upon my word, Arthur, this is too ridiculous! For Heaven's sake, stay at home, if you want to! I can tell them you're sick; or perhaps we can invent a lie that will suit your conscience better than that one. We needn't stick close together all the time. I like parties, so I'll go to them. You like staying at home and reading, so you needn't go. If you'd rather be with your book than with me, all right. Only don't blame me if—if"—

Here Amy burst into tears: whether they were involuntary or manufactured I shall not pretend to say. At any rate, they answered their purpose. Arthur embraced her, and told her that he would go; and after a suitable amount

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

of April weather the sun came out from behind the clouds, and Arthur received a kiss and Amy's forgiveness.

A series of victorious battles does not always mean a victorious war. Louis XIV. kept whipping William of Orange time after time, and yet, when it was all over, somehow or other William had come out ahead. Amy and Arthur had had a great many encounters, and Amy had been victorious every time; but, as was the case with the Grand Monarch, her supplies were getting exhausted. As a last resource, she had always been able to conquer Arthur's resistance by crying; but crying is like everything else,—people don't think much of it when they're used to it. A rainstorm in the Desert of Arabia would drive the natives wild with awe and delight; but a rainstorm in Boston only makes the inhabitants feel like swearing.

Arthur was becoming annoyingly callous, so that Amy had to keep her rapier very sharp, and prod him more and more vigorously with it. Still, she was able to hold him pretty well in order as yet. He went to parties more and more unwillingly; but he went. The parties were pleasant enough, and he would have enjoyed going out, say, once a week; but to listen to Mrs. Potts of Hartford, and Miss Dillingham of Farmington, every night, when he might be listening to Shakespeare and Goethe and Victor Hugo, was beginning to bore him beyond endurance. The button on the end of his foil was getting loose.

Then a sudden check came to war and rapiers and foils and hostile feelings. Amy announced to Arthur that a child was to be born to them. From that moment till months after the baby was born, insubordination on Arthur's part was at an end. He could endure anything so long

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

as there was a reason for Amy's querulousness and selfishness. He recognized that, in such a position, husband and wife have each a part to play: she has her sufferings to endure; he, her complaints. It is the custom of a not quite heartless world to draw a generous line through the weaknesses and follies, the fault-finding and irritability, of a woman who is waiting for her child to be born. Let us follow the world's example.

The baby proved to be a girl. She was named Caroline, after Mrs. Sands senior. "Your mother'll probably do more for her than mine," Amy had said to Arthur.

Arthur was prodigiously fond of the child, and Amy really wanted to be. She would watch her husband with a wistful expression as he made a fool of himself over the baby, and almost wish that she could be silly like that, too. But her efforts to become fond of Caroline, if efforts she made, were unsuccessful; and many and many a time she was out at a dinner-party when Arthur was helping the nurse put the baby to bed. For you can't begin loving all of a sudden, any more than you can become a great general without preparation. If you want to be a distinguished commander, you must go to West Point, and then be a lieutenant for five years, and a captain for ten, and a major for three, and so on. You can't go through all the ranks in five minutes, like Fritz in *La Grande Duchesse*. And if a mother is to love a child with the real true mother's love, she must have loved her own mother, and her father, and her brothers and sisters, and lots of friends, and her husband more than all the rest put together. She can't begin without practice. Amy had an instinctive affection for her child, there was no doubt about

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

that; the same affection that a lion, or a dog, or a snake, for aught I know, has for its young. She could not bear to hear it cry, and when it was vaccinated she flew at the doctor when she saw blood on the little arm. But she had not the slightest wish to nurse the child, so that, on the whole, perhaps, her affection was not quite the same as that of the lioness.

Children often renew the bond between husband and wife, so that those who are drifting apart are drawn together again. But little Caroline was not successful as a mediator. Arthur would sit with her on his knee, and talk to her complainingly about Amy. "She's gone away and left us all alone, baby, just because she wants to dance with that Colonel Harrison, who's on the governor's staff. I'll colonel him, won't I, baby? But before that, she's going to dine at the Trimbles'. The dinner'll be over just about when you go to bed and then Mrs. Potts will sing; but never you mind, baby, for papa'll sing to you, and papa can sing better than she can. Isn't it funny that mamma likes to hear Mrs. Potts sing?"

From this elegant oration it can be seen that Arthur was beginning to deny himself the pleasure of escorting his wife to evening engagements. Amy was not entirely sorry, for she could behave more as she liked when he was not with her. She was growing afraid of Arthur, just because he never did complain when there was so much to complain of. She wished she knew what was going on inside of him. If she had only heard him say to baby that he would "colonel" Colonel Harrison, she might have known better what to do; but baby never told her.

It is remarkable to what an extent people can be talked about and never know it. Colonel Har-

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

rison and Mrs. Arthur Sands were both well up in the gossip of Hartford; but there was one flirtation of which neither had ever heard any one speak, and that was their own. Colonel Harrison was a very handsome man,—his enemies said he was pretty,—with a charmingly pink complexion and beautifully kept finger-nails. He was, to Amy's mind, the most entertaining talker in Hartford; at any rate, he was possessed of much more sympathy of a certain kind than Arthur was. For if you told Arthur the story of an adventure in which you had got the better of some one in rather a mean way, the greatest approbation you could expect from him was a grunt; whereas the colonel would be intensely amused, and had a very polite way of alluding to the anecdote at some future occasion. Then the colonel was a man of leisure, and could come and call on Amy while Arthur was stupidly earning his (and her) living. He had the glamour of being considered fast, too,—at least, he was so considered in dear, slow-going old Hartford,—and with some ladies that is a great point. It is a strange fact that many women rather like a man to be fast; when, if they knew the exact things he did, they would be apt to change the adjective to "vulgar." One of the most fascinating fast men I know gained a part of his reputation for speed by sitting on a curbstone and throwing the mud of the gutter over his head. No woman would have been especially pleased with his conduct if she had happened to be under his escort at the time. Yet this is, comparatively speaking, a most innocent and even refined occupation for a fast man who really deserves his reputation. Of course there is no use taking the reader into a pigsty, but just multiply that mud-throwing incident by fifty, dearest reader, and

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

then, if you happen to be a young woman, examine the result, and make up your mind whether you want to flirt with a person who does such things, or not. The trouble seems to come from our having a fatal tendency to call a spade a diamond. True, the ace of spades is the hardest card in the pack to distinguish, and it is certainly a most elegant-looking one; but it is a spade just the same, and we might as well call it so. We are apt to say of a man, "He's fast, you know, but he's a good-hearted fellow." That is all very well if we know what "fast" means. To the average woman, it means getting a little flushed with champagne once in a while, or going to the theatre in rather low company. To me, my friend in the gutter would seem to form rather a good allegorical picture of a fast man, if he had been engaged in throwing some of the mud at other people, and only a portion on his own head.

One day Arthur set out for Philadelphia, and at New Haven received a telegram from his father informing him that the journey was unnecessary. So, like King Shahzenan and other husbands of flirtatious wives, he came home very unexpectedly. He was not in the least surprised to see Colonel Harrison's dog-cart before the door; he had half expected that. But when he entered the house, he saw something better calculated to astonish him. It was a warm day in June, so that he passed into the parlor through the glass door, which stood open. With their backs toward him stood Amy and Colonel Harrison: she reading a letter; he, with his arm around her, apparently trying to kiss her cheek, an operation which she dexterously avoided by quick movements of her head, while she continued to read the letter.

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

It was really comical when Colonel Harrison, hearing a step behind him, turned round and encountered Arthur. The fascinating lover was so utterly and evidently inferior in every respect to the injured husband that even Arthur himself saw the humor of the situation. The pretty little fast man and the splendid great respectable one stood face to face for a moment; and at last Amy saw the difference. The beautiful little colonel scowled, and tried to look down his antagonist; and the general effect was very much as if the leader of the german should endeavor to look down Prince Bismarck. The contrast was too much for Amy, and, though her feelings were wrought to the highest pitch, she burst into a peal of half-hysterical laughter.

Arthur had smiled grimly at first, but he soon became serious again. He and the colonel looked at each other for a moment, and then Arthur said, "Will you come outside on the piazza, Colonel Harrison? I have something to say to you."

Colonel Harrison tried to speak. His voice failed him. He held himself very straight as he followed Arthur; but, in spite of all he could do, a look of terror crossed his face, which Amy did not fail to detect. She supposed that Arthur was going to chastise him in some way; but she made no attempt to interfere. "The little fool!" she said to herself. "He's in for it now, and I'm glad of it!" And then she began to wonder how she should get out of her own scrape.

Outside on the piazza everything went very quietly.

"I want to ask you to take your leave now, Colonel Harrison," Arthur said, "and also to request you not to come here again. Will you oblige me so far?"

"Do you mean to kick me out of the house?" the colonel sputtered.

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

"Only if you won't go any other way," Arthur replied. "When I came into the room there, my first impulse was to throw you out of the window; but the next moment I realized that the fact that you were small and weak was no reason why I should attack you, when I might have been afraid of a stronger man than I. However, it's only fair to warn you that my patience is going fast."

Colonel Harrison scowled again, and walked away with the same dignity which a boy exhibits when he scornfully leaves his comrades,—very grand, but expecting a snowball in the back of his head at any minute.

When Arthur came back into the room, Amy was crying. She ran up to him and caught his hands in hers. "I haven't done anything wrong, Arthur!" she protested. "Honestly I haven't. You don't think I have, do you?"

Arthur looked at her coldly. "Why, no," he said deliberately. "I don't believe you ever did more than flirt with the little man. You haven't enough of a heart to forget yourself entirely, Amy. Oh no, I don't believe you went very far with the colonel. He isn't exactly the sort of man to be jealous of."

Amy looked imploringly up into his face. "Then you'll forgive me, won't you, Arthur? And it will all be the way it used to be when we were first married, and we both loved each other better than all the world?"

"I can't recall the time you speak of," he said. "As to forgiving you, I've just learnt what sort of a woman you are, Amy, and I can't unlearn it merely because you go down on your knees and beg me to. I shan't bear any malice or keep alluding to Colonel Harrison, I can promise you that, at any rate. But you needn't bother to cry;

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

it doesn't have any effect on me."

Amy looked at him with wide-opened eyes. "You've never talked to me so before," she said in a frightened tone. "I'm afraid you don't care for me any more, Arthur."

"No," he answered, "I'm afraid I don't."

The button had come off the foil.

After a little pause, during which there seemed to be a great deal of electricity in the air, Arthur spoke again: "It's only fair to tell you, Amy, that I've told Colonel Harrison not to come here any more. If you meet him anywhere else, perhaps you will be so good as not to know him."

Amy looked up at the stern face before her. Was this her husband? "Very well," Arthur, she replied; "just as you say."

"And now," he went on, "we're both a little over-excited, so I guess I'll go in town. No, not now, Amy!" As she endeavored to kiss him, he put her aside, though not unkindly. Then, stopping at the door, "Will you be at home to dinner to-night?"

"I will if you want me to."

"Thank you, I should prefer it." With that he went out.

Amy flung herself into an armchair and tried to think. The events of the last half-hour had so completely changed her position that she could not accommodate herself to her new surroundings. Her husband proved to be a different sort of man from what she had expected. She felt like Baron Munchausen's horse, who thought he was tied to a small post, and the next morning found himself hitched to a steeple.

The truth is—and every woman must learn it sooner or later—a man is a very different sort of person when he's in love with you and when he isn't. No autocracy can be more complete

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

than that which a woman exercises over the man who loves her, even if his love, like Arthur's, is really only an extremely good imitation of love. A smile or a frown can raise him to the clouds, or cast him down into the pit; a nod is sufficient to send him on the most difficult and dangerous enterprise; the least unkindness gives him pain; he throws away his armor, and exposes his naked breast to the arrows of her scorn and the poisoned darts of her satire. His nature bends the knee to hers, and she gives him agony or bliss with a word. It matters not how noble he is, or how frivolous she. That only accentuates matters. The nobler he is, the lowlier he kneels; the more frivolous she, the more she delights to scorn him. But when he awakes from his dream, mark the contrast. He recovers entirely from his infatuation in an instant; she cannot help caring for him a little; nay, she is overcome by a strange feeling of respect for this slave who has suddenly become her equal, and who bids fair to be her master. Her downfall is the more terrible because of the loftiness of her seat. In vain she snatches up the small weapons which she has used so long that she is unaccustomed to anything more formidable. Her arrows and darts drop harmless from her hands as she hears the first boom of cannon sounding from the hostile camp. She never knew he had any artillery!

Of course, if they are not married, the man merely goes away, after having given her a few good showers of grapeshot, and tells the next woman he falls in love with that he never really cared for her predecessor,—“at least, not the way I care for you!” But if they are married, they have to make up their minds to it; and now that all alluring mist is dissipated, and the two see each other as they are, the late autocrat is apt

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

to go to the wall. There was no more temporizing in Arthur's policy toward his wife. The stronger nature asserted itself at last, and Amy always gave in, and never knew why.

"Well, Amy, aren't you coming to church?"

"I've got a headache, Arthur!"

A look.

"I'll go if you want me to."

"I think it would be better."

When there was a rebellion, it was like the French trying to get out of Sedan,—something that was understood beforehand by the enemy and guarded against.

"I won't have Annie sent away!"

"I've already sent her away."

"I'll have her back again."

"I told her that she was not to come back. I don't think she will."

"She's the only maid I ever had that I liked!"

"She's a bad woman, Amy; and she isn't coming back again. Will you please give me a cup of coffee?"

"Arthur!"—with tears—"you have no right to treat me so! I'm going to go over to mamma's to-day and live with her till you learn to—to"—

"Your mother agrees with me that it was foolish of you to go over there the other time, and she has promised me she won't take you in again. Come, Amy, do you mean to give me my coffee?"

Silence, while the coffee is poured out.

"By the way, Amy, I think we've had about enough of these outbreaks of yours. They don't improve your appearance or my temper. Just think it over, will you? I guess we can get on without them. Well, I'm off now. Good-by."

Amy looked at him as he walked toward the

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

door. "Aren't you going to kiss me good-by, Arthur?"

He came back and kissed her.

Amy felt a little ashamed of asking for that kiss, but somehow she could not get on without one when Arthur went away. It made her feel respectable. She did not exactly love Arthur, but she depended on him, and she kept admiring him more and more.

As to Arthur, his enforced sternness wore upon him. Like the marksman who cuts his arm and dips each bullet in his own blood, in order to insure his aim, he paid for the complete control that he gained over his wife by a constant drain on his own high spirits and energy. Yet the Colonel Harrison affair, which might have ended in Amy's utter ruin, compelled him to see that he must keep her under his thumb if he would save her from herself. Amy thrived under the treatment. Sometimes it almost seemed as if she really loved her husband; certainly she came nearer loving him than she had ever been to loving any one else. The new system was a success. But Arthur's was a nature formed for pleasant, easy, genial intercourse; and though it had a background of uncommon strength, he hated to use the strength all the time,—just as an orchestra leader would hate to give a concert performed exclusively by his bass viols and trombones.

When a man falls sick, his friends look at his illness in different ways. Some regard it as a misfortune, others as a fault. The larger part of the population of the world, being liable to illness themselves, have a deep sympathy for all sorts of suffering, no matter what foolishness brought it about; as a mother rubs her child's knee, and kisses and cuddles him, even though he fell down

A PHILOSOPHER WITH  
while climbing after the jam pot. But there is a school of reasoners, and I think a growing one, which regards illness as merely the natural result of imprudence.

"I have a toothache."

"How long is it since you went to the dentist?"

"Three years."

"Then I'm not sorry for you. If you had gone every six months, as I have, you would not be suffering now."

This logic, besides being disagreeable, is not so sound as it at first appears; for, granted that the sufferer is in fault, is that any reason why we should not be sorry for him? Nay, is it not a reason why we should be sorrier for him than ever? I am sorry for the man unjustly condemned to prison, but I am far sorrier for the man who, besides being compelled to carry chains about with him, is also obliged to carry the consciousness that he deserves them.

Arthur belonged distinctly to the sympathetic school. One day when the streets were drowned in melted snow, Amy went out in her low shoes and caught a bad cold. Arthur had warned her several times against tempting Providence in just that way; but on returning home here refrained from uttering the four monosyllables the use of which I have sometimes suspected to be the unpardonable sin. In fact, he was very much frightened, though he did not tell Amy so; for he had noticed, what she herself had never observed, that hers was a constitution which gave no sign of weakness till a total collapse was at hand. She was like a ship with its flag nailed to the mast, so that if you see the flag go down you can be sure the ship is going down, too. Arthur had a headache every week or so, and caught cold half a dozen times in a winter; but he had not been

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

really sick since he could remember. Amy never had headaches—except the convenient kind which all women have, save you, dear reader. Only twice since Arthur had known her had she felt any physical discomfort, and each time she had been seriously ill. So when he came home from the office, and she told him she had a cold, he made her go to bed at once, and sent for the doctor; and when the doctor said he was afraid it was pneumonia, Arthur was not surprised.

It was a great relief to him to be able to behave pleasantly to Amy, and not to have to keep bullying her all the time. After all, there are few pleasures like waiting on a sick person! We do not mind being called martyrs and saints when we do it, but secretly we are perfectly conscious that we like it; or, if we are not conscious of it, we become so as soon as any one else proposes to take our place. For some inscrutable reason, we come to love the invalid all the more because he is so foolish and impatient and exasperating, just as I am very sure the angels in heaven are a great deal fonder of us because we are not mixtures of Socrates and Job and Moses. A great deal of Arthur's old feeling for Amy came back, now that she was pale and suffering and had lost her good looks. As for her, she was one of the sick people who are seized with a mania for having one particular person always near. She could hardly eat or go to sleep when Arthur was out of the room. The trained nurse was with her at night, but Arthur had to be with her almost the entire day. Her sister Isabel came in to help take care of her, but she had to go away again. Amy wanted Arthur. The poor girl had become possessed with the idea that she would not live, and, in spite of the doctor's prohibition of talking, she insisted on telling her husband a great

A PHILOSOPHER WITH

many things, foolish things that she had done. She told him about the other two engagements by which she had bound herself just before she engaged herself to him, and about a great many other things, some of them wicked, and some only silly. And Arthur would answer her conscience-stricken whispers with a pressure of the hand and a kiss now and then, and would absolve her from all her sins and follies as if he had been a father confessor. Once they talked of Colonel Harrison. Arthur told her how he had met the colonel one dark night on Asylum Avenue, and how the little man had crossed to the opposite side, not supposing that Arthur had seen him. It was pathetic to hear Amy's weak little laugh at the valiant colonel's discomfiture. Then Arthur told how he had helped Harrison to get a diplomatic appointment; and how the colonel had thanked him, and apologized for what he termed his blackguardly conduct; and how Arthur had asked him to come and call on Mrs. Sands when she was on her feet again; and how the tears had come into the colonel's eyes, and he had assured Arthur that he had never met such a perfect gentleman. Then Amy laughed once more, and said she should like to see the little fool again, if Arthur would be there too; but as to being on her feet any more, she never expected that. Sometimes Amy had the baby brought in, and spent a long time looking first at Caroline and then at Arthur, and then at a looking-glass in her hand, trying to see how much the child looked like Arthur, and how much like her. And each time she was delighted, for the baby looked exactly like Arthur, and acted like him, too, and apparently had nothing of Amy in her composition.

There is nothing in books that strikes us as so

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

sudden, and usually so inartistic, as the occurrence of a death. "Orlando died." Our feeling commonly is, "I don't believe it." The truth is that no amount of preparation can properly furnish the mind for the reception of such a revolutionary statement. That Orlando, whose progress I have perhaps traced for years, whom I have learned to admire, with whom I have almost identified myself, should come to a full stop, should disappear never to return, is too much for my imagination. "Orlando's death is too sudden," I write in my criticism of the book. Yet the suddenness, the shock, the bad taste, if I may say so, of the thing, may all be observed far more strongly in real life. "Your cousin Margaret is dead," some one says. "I don't believe it," is again the first response that comes into my mind, though I may not utter it. It is hard to assimilate the fact that she is dead: it is indigestible, and the acids of the mind must work on it a long time before they master it. After hearing that cousin Margaret is dead, I might perhaps be surprised if I were to meet her on the street; but I am almost equally surprised not to meet her.

Amy did not live three weeks from the day on which she fell ill. The doctor had been anxious from the first, for she would not fight against her sickness; she seemed perfectly content to die. All that she felt uneasy about was the pain and trouble and anxiety she had given Arthur ever since they were married; and he forgave her all these things so often that after a time she appeared to think of them less. They had one little talk about religion. She asked him what he believed; and with manly awkwardness he told her his simple faith. She said she would try to believe that, too; for whether it was true or not, if it was good enough for him, it was good enough

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

for her. She kept her consciousness to the end, and just before she died she stretched out her arms to Arthur. He kissed her, and no doubt the poor girl felt that that kiss was the seal of his forgiveness for all the trials she had brought upon him; for her face was happy after that, and she smiled at him as he sat by the bedside and held her cold fingers in his great, warm, manly hand. Then the life gradually faded out of her face, and the cold fingers grew colder, and with one final labored throb the foolish, false, repentant little heart stopped beating.

So Arthur was left alone: an older man than the Arthur Sands who asked Amy Lunt to marry him; a wiser man, perhaps,—perhaps not. For experience does not teach; it merely accentuates.

Amy's sister Isabel had been, as a child, one of the most affectionate and unconscious little persons that ever lived. Amy had spoiled her. But, spoiled as she was, the old affection looked out of her great brown eyes, though it might not be in her heart; and whether she was unconscious or not, she looked as if she were. Just as Bernadotte or Davout learned from Napoleon how to move armies, so she had learned from Amy how to move men up and down on her board, with all the heartlessness and much of the skill of a professional chess-player. And if the board fell off her lap, and the piece tumbled into the fire, why, at the worst she could get a new set and start a new game.

Isabel had tried her hand at a little mild flirtation with Arthur while he was still married; but Arthur was too good a husband for that sort of thing; and Amy, who could see about as far into a stone post as most people, suggested to

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

Isabel that if she wanted hunting, she had better hunt something else, and leave her sister's tame buffalo alone. After Amy's death, however, things were different. Arthur did not deceive himself about Amy: he knew that he had been very unhappy with her. But he was just as wretched now that his home was broken up as if it had been a happy one. He was much at the Lunts', and Isabel's sympathy and sisterly tenderness were a great comfort to him.

It is one of the curious things in life how sure we are of the future, and how seldom the future bears us out. "I shall love you forever," the boy says to the girl. What does he know about "forever"? It is easier to say than "for five minutes," and certainly sounds more romantic; but, as a matter of fact there are a great many five minutes in the world, and very few forevers. The strange part of the boy's statement is that he gives a promise which depends for its fulfillment on forces over which he has absolutely no control. If he had said, "I shall kiss you once a day forever," or even, "I shall think of you forever," he might have made a good try at it; but "I shall love you forever"! He might as well say, "I shall have it sunny weather forever." This statement might possibly be true, if the boy lived in the Desert of Sahara; but, true or false, he puts it in a very foolish way, for he has nothing to do with the sun or the rain any more than he has with the motions of his own heart. If a rainstorm came up he could not send it away; and if he suddenly stopped loving his sweetheart, no amount of trying could make him begin again.

So when a man loses his wife. If any individual could be found at the same time impudent and courageous enough to ask him, the day after the funeral, if he intended to marry again, the

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

widower would probably awake from his stupor of sorrow long enough to kick the meddler downstairs. But if he could be prevailed upon to give a definite answer, he would say "No! Never! I have enough to do to sorrow over what I have lost!" Yet the chances are even that he will be married again in two years. The truth is, we don't know anything about how we shall feel in the future. I know of a lady who woke up one morning and found that she had forgotten everything that had ever happened to her. The same thing happens to us all every morning, to a lesser degree. A man may say, "I shall mourn for my wife just as deeply twenty years hence as I do to-day;" but no amount of saying so will make him do it, and nothing else will make him do it, either. We can regulate the mourning on our hats, but not that in our hearts.

Amy's illness had brought on an Indian summer to Arthur's affection, and he never loved her so dearly as the day she died. He grieved for her deeply and truly, and added to his grief by vain regrets because he had not been to her a better husband. It would not be true to say that he determined never to marry again: he never thought about it, any more than he thought about committing murder. It was one of the impossibilities. For some months he went nowhere except to the Lunts'. He felt drawn to them because they shared his grief. They were very kind to him, especially Isabel, who always knew by instinct just what he wanted. When he came in to have her sing and play to him, he did not need to ask her; she knew what he had come for, and she knew just the sort of things he would like to hear. For though she had outgrown her old, simple-hearted, affectionate nature, she could reassume it when she chose; just as the world-worn actress

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

plays Camille or Fedora, and yet has not forgotten her first part of Little Bo-Peep, though she has not acted it since she was an innocent child.

There are degrees of grief just as there are degrees of joy; and Arthur was never less miserable than when he sat listening to Isabel's singing. No one ever sang with deeper feeling than Isabel; and I, for one, do not blame Arthur for thinking that she had a warm tender heart. It gave him pleasure to look at her, too: she was beautiful at the piano. Her wonderful wavy light-brown hair and her innocent face formed a quaint but fascinating contrast to the unrelieved black of her dress. A beautiful woman is never so beautiful as when in mourning; the holiness of sorrow gives her an added charm. When the playing was over, Isabel would talk to Arthur, or more often would listen to him while he told her stories of Amy, and how things would have gone so much better if only he had acted rightly. Then she would comfort him as only an affectionate woman can, and he would shake his head, but smile at the same time, and feel glad he came.

So Arthur became dependent upon Isabel. It was not that he had forgotten Amy: it was because he liked to talk and think about her that he wanted to be with Isabel,—at least it was so at first. Afterwards Isabel's own charm began to take possession of him. When he was conscious of it, he tried to fight against it; very much as a fly first begins operations for avoiding a spider's web after he is already securely caught in it. One day Arthur realized that he was walking up the Lunts' avenue so that he might see Isabel, and not so that he might see Amy's sister. He stopped on the piazza, irresolute. Perhaps he had better not go in. "Arthur!" came a silver voice from the parlor window. And the jump that

## A PHILOSOPHER WITH

his heart gave had very little to do with the woman who had been Mrs. Arthur Sands one short year ago.

Arthur was not entirely deceived about Isabel's character. Skillful as she was at dissimulation, she could not entirely hide her real self from a man who saw her almost every day, and who, though preoccupied, was far from stupid. But Arthur was a person whose thoughts did not naturally run towards the faults of the girl he was in love with. Though a good orthodox Congregationalist in his religious faith, he was a Unitarian in love matters: he was a firm believer in heaven, and did his best not to think about any other place. He was obliged to see that Isabel was sometimes cross and overbearing to her mother, but he thought the less of it because she was always sunny and considerate to him. Several times he could not help noticing that her sense of honor (a virtue the possession of which is difficult to simulate) was not up to his own high standard. This was hard on Isabel, for, as regarded her sense of honor, by judicious inflation she had managed to make something perilously like nothing assume really respectable proportions; and for Arthur to notice that it was wavering, and did not seem to be very solid, merely showed that he was hard to satisfy. He perceived more than once that she was talking to produce a certain effect, and not because she really believed the things she said. She saw that he noticed this, but she could not always guard against it. It is hard to pretend to be truthful when you are not, because the essence of truth is that you are not pretending.

Isabel knew a great deal better than I do how Arthur ought to be managed, but if I might presume to criticise one little point, I should sug-

## AN EYE FOR BEAUTY

gest that she need not have given herself so much trouble to seem better than she was. The gist of the matter was right here: Arthur came to see her because she was sympathetic, affectionate, fascinating, and pretty; and if he came to see her enough, he would marry her. He did not come to see her because she had a high sense of honor or a great regard for truth. Unfortunately, those qualities do not draw well. In a wife they are of inestimably more importance than fascination or beauty; but no one ever went to call on a girl because she did not tell lies.

When it came to the point, everything went quietly enough. Arthur and Isabel were in the parlor together; Isabel standing in the oriel window looking at the sunset, while Arthur looked at her. Suddenly it came over him that he would give anything in the world for the right to hold that girl in his arms and kiss that cheek which would have tempted a saint. He rose to his feet. "Isabel!" he said.

When she turned and their eyes met, she knew that the battle was won.

What's the matter, reader? There you are again, banging my poor story against the table! What do you mean by calling Arthur a fool and an egregious ass? I'd let you know that my hero was neither! He was a man who, having done a foolish thing, was suddenly brought back to the point he started from, and, having another opportunity, did it again. Most of us would. We don't get much wiser as we get older. Arthur Sands was a good man and a sensible one. He had one weak point: he was peculiarly sensitive to the charm of an attractive and beautiful woman. Carried away by his feelings, he married a foolish, heartless girl, and spent three unhappy

years with her. When it was all over, and he had another chance given him, he was carried away by his feelings again, and this time married a girl a little less foolish and a little more heartless than the other. But she was fascinating,—there was no doubt about that. It was all perfectly natural. Unwise he was, perhaps, but who is not unwise in that way? Do you think you would have escaped, reader, or would have wanted to escape, if Isabel had really undertaken to marry you?

# HARMONY







## HARMONY

She is drawing near  
With the bearing proud  
Of a queen without fear  
In a noisy crowd,  
With a cheek as fair  
As a sunset cloud  
And a rose in her hair.

Her face is pure  
As evening skies,  
A miniature  
Of Paradise,  
And the thoughts that grace  
Her honest eyes  
Are as pure as her face.

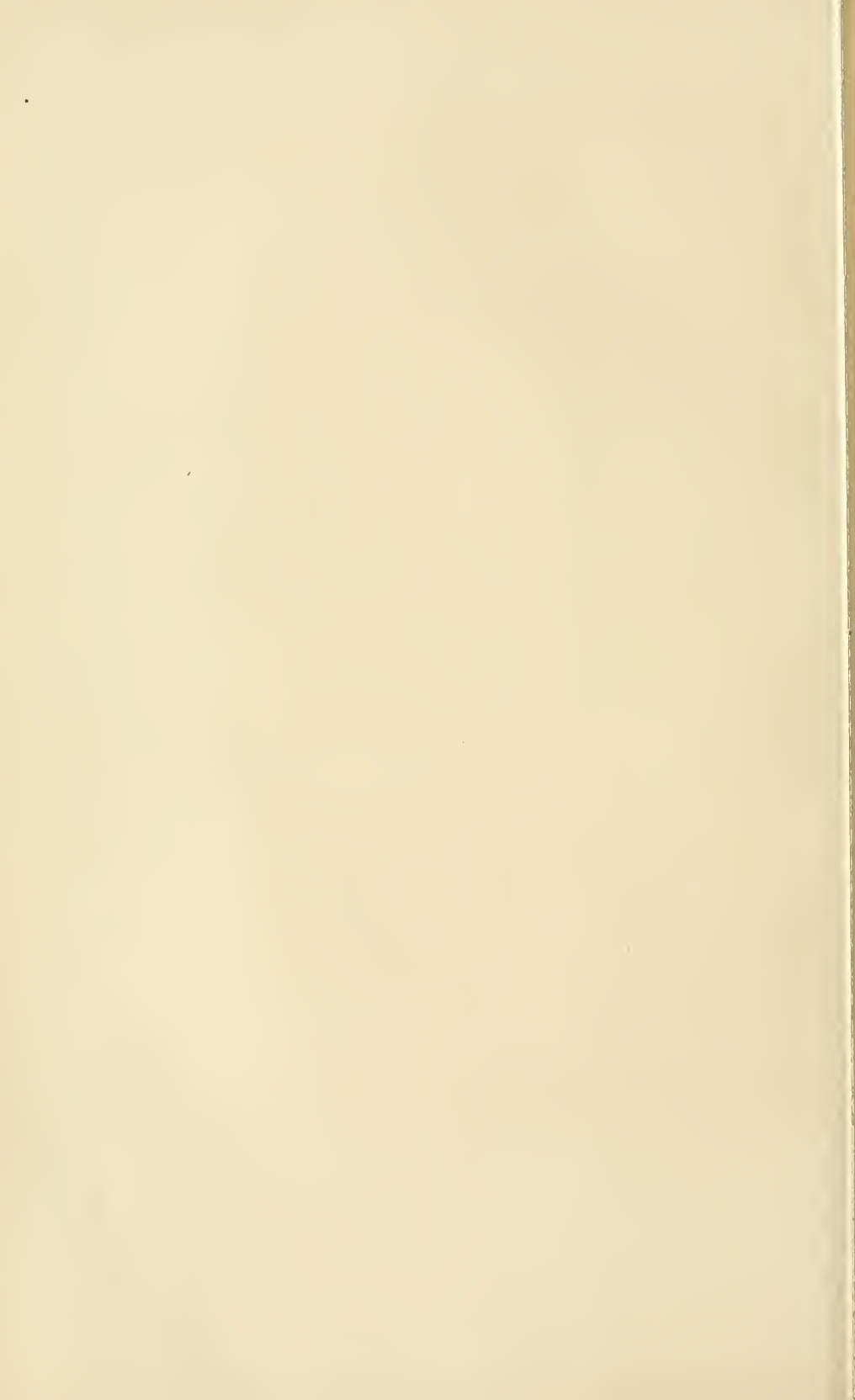
She smiles as we meet,  
Smiles, and takes wing.—  
All is gone but a sweet  
Remembering  
Of who was there  
And a breath of spring  
From the rose in her hair.



HELEN







## TOO MUCH OF A BAD THING



It was growing dark. Helen sat on the divan in the bow-window working at her embroidery and occasionally looking up Beacon Street at the fading sunset. When it was too dark to work, she conscientiously laid aside her embroidery and turned her attention altogether upon outdoors. Helen was looking especially well that evening. She had on a dark green silk waist made on such a generous plan and with such ample sleeves that her extreme slenderness was not so obvious as usual. As she looked down into the street, her delicately aquiline nose and fine forehead and chin stood out almost like a silhouette against the brightness of the window, and the last glow of the sun made a halo of her golden hair. Helen always looked her best when she was alone: she never would have sat at the window in such a picturesque way if any one had been looking at her.

The maid came in to light up the room, and to bring in a letter and the newspaper. When the curtains and lamps had been attended to, and the servant had taken her departure, Helen sat down to read the letter. Her chair was a comfortable one, but she was one of those women who have to sit up straight no matter what sort of chair they are in. She recognized her mother's handwriting.

"My dearest Helen," Mrs. Vail wrote, "Do you not realize the position that your father and I are in? Your father is weaker than ever: his par-

alysis is growing upon him fast. My nerves are gradually giving way, and no wonder. I have begged Alice to come and help me, but she says her husband and children need her so much that she cannot leave them. She says she thinks nothing but a matter of life and death ought to take a wife away from her husband any way, that her first duty is to him; and in fact she intimates that when she took George for a husband, she said good-bye to her father and mother.

"You have no such absurd views, I'm sure, Helen. As if a husband would die if his wife were away from him for three months! I think it's often a good thing for both, just as it's a good thing for a man to be away all day at his work. But not to do too much talking, you really must come out to Sacramento and help me with your father, Helen. You, at least, have no children to keep you in Boston. I can stand the strain no longer, and it may be the last chance you will have to see your father. Do not advise with Robert as Alice did with her husband. Tell him that you must go, and do not let him see that there is any other course open to you. That is the way I always did with your father, and he invariably gave in; and I'm sure until he broke down so completely there never was a happier marriage.

"Above all, as I said before, do not feel badly about leaving Robert. I am a great deal older than you, Helen, and I know a good many things about men that nothing but experience will teach. A husband is often relieved when you go off and make a visit for a short time: your father never objected to my doing so, and sometimes I actually thought he seemed to be the better for it. Of course Robert will lament in that impulsive way of his; but impulse is born in a moment and dies as quickly.

## A BAD THING

"That is settled then; and I shall see you before a month is out. It is such a distance that you had better come for at least three months, though perhaps you might say to Robert 'two months and possibly more.' That would be nothing but the truth, I'm sure. I'm perfectly delighted at the thought of seeing you. Your father, although his mind is going fast, has somehow got the idea that you are coming, and if you were to stay away, I could not answer for the consequences. But you will come, I'm certain. Remember it's almost six months since we have seen you.

"Give my best love to Robert.

"Your affectionate but exhausted

"Mother."

Mrs. Vail wrote an abominable hand, and it took Helen some time to make the letter out. When she had finished it, however, she attacked it again bravely, and this time had but little difficulty. After the second reading, she let it fall in her lap, and sat looking at the fire until she heard a latch key in the hall door and rose to greet her husband.

Robert Hazlitt was tall and nearly as straight as his wife, though his erect carriage was evidently the result of an almost perfectly symmetrical physique, while hers looked as if it were the inheritance of two or three generations of New England consciences. He had a large head, and his features were decidedly broad, though by no means unpleasant. Like half the young men one meets, he was losing his hair at the temples; but his clean-shaven face seemed so young for a man of thirty that his high temples gave his head an intellectual look which it might have missed without them. Altogether he was a

TOO MUCH OF  
charming looking fellow, the kind of husband  
that one likes to see come in at the door.

As soon as he saw his wife he sprang forward and kissed her. "Oh, I'm so glad to see you again!" he said, giving her a very boyish hug. "When I stopped painting and got up from my chair I was almost dead—like those Assyrians in the Bible: 'And when they arose they were all dead corpses!' Come, Nelly, you must love me a little and give me a good kiss, for I'm so tired I can barely stand."

Helen disengaged herself from his embrace without giving him the good kiss that he requested, and her husband had to sit down without it. She took a chair at some distance from him and began to work at her embroidery.

"Have you heard from The American Artists?" she inquired.

"Yes. Two of the pictures have been taken; but the third, the one of Moonlight on the Cornfield, was rejected."

"What induced you to send that, Robert? It wasn't worthy of you. So fantastic! I never liked that picture."

"Now, Nelly, don't be stern with me," said Robert, crossing the room and sitting beside his wife. "Oh, it's so nice to be home again!" he continued, lolling back in his chair and stretching out his legs. "Nelly, you don't know how I missed you last year when you were away! But now we won't either of us ever go away again!"

Helen moved uneasily in her chair. "Oh, that reminds me," she said. "I'm sorry, Robert; but it's absolutely necessary for me to go to Sacramento next Monday. Mother really needs me to help take care of Father. I'm sorry, but really there are no two ways about it."

She looked at him defiantly, as if expecting

## A BAD THING

him to battle with her resolution, but Robert sat perfectly still except that his face fell; and she saw, rather to her disgust, that there were tears in his eyes. He took her hand.

"I'm disappointed, of course, Nelly," he said tenderly. "I hoped we should have a cosy little winter this year all by ourselves; and you've made our little apartment such a paradise that I must confess I've been dreaming of how happy we should be together after having been separated nearly all last year. But don't think I want to interfere with anything you decide to do, darling. If you think it's your duty to go, I won't say a word; and I wouldn't if you said you were going away to-morrow for six years, though honestly, Nelly, I think I should die if you were gone as long as that."

"It's only for two months and perhaps a little more," said Helen stiffly, taking up her embroidery again. She usually froze when her husband grew warm.

"Oh well, that's not so bad as it might be," poor Robert observed, trying to be cheerful. "But Nelly, why didn't your mother ask Alice?"

"She did, but Alice wouldn't go."

"Why not?"

"She said she didn't think she ought to leave her husband."

"Well, but you might—" here Robert stopped, biting his lip. "You might have said the same thing," he was going to say; and Helen knew it. She blushed and answered his observation as if he had completed it.

"Alice has her children, you know," she said.

Robert did not pursue the subject. They sat in silence for perhaps five minutes, Robert looking lazily across the room at the fire, and Helen working at her everlasting embroidery. At last Helen looked up at the clock.

## TOO MUCH OF

"You've only twenty minutes to get on your dress suit," she remarked.

"Oh, Nelly," her husband whined in a naughty boy's voice. "It's only Mary who's coming to dinner, isn't it? Mary won't care."

"I care," said Helen.

Robert grew cheerful with an effort. "Well, Nelly," he said, kissing his wife, "I'm sure I'd be a brute if I didn't do as you wanted when you're only going to be here three days longer. Must I shave, too?"

"Yes, dear, I think you'd better," Helen replied, smiling in spite of herself at the wry face her husband made as he rushed from the room.

Mary Aikenside made her appearance not many minutes after Robert left the room to dress. She was one of the plain girls who look as if they were extremely nice, and as a matter of fact are so. Nowadays when people are reading character from faces, hands, and feet for aught I know, beauty of expression, beauty that means goodness, is beginning to count for something. To one who could judge the character from the outer appearance, Mary Aikenside was beautiful; to a commonplace observer she was a very plain woman.

"Hasn't Bob come home?" Mary inquired, peering about the room as if she expected Hazlitt to come out from under the sofa.

"Yes; he's getting ready for dinner," Helen replied, moving a chair up to the fire so that Mary might warm her cold feet.

"He isn't putting on a dress suit, is he?" asked Mary, stopping just as she was about to sit down. A blush on Helen's delicate cheek told her that her dreadful surmise was well founded. "You made him!" she cried, sitting down with a bang.

Helen, like all people who know they are right,

## A BAD THING

hated to be found fault with, even in small matters. "He may as well dress like a gentleman," she said, coldly; and Mary, perceiving that her friend was irritated, let the dress suit drop. Mary, like Helen, was working at a piece of embroidery,—a bureau cover, white on white, just the thing for a wedding present; and as neither of the women had anything especial to say, they worked away for fully ten minutes in silence. Helen sat bolt upright, holding her embroidery haughtily as if she despised it: Mary bent over her work, and showed an almost affectionate interest in each stitch she took.

"How nice it will be for Rob to have you at home this winter!" Mary said at last.

"I wish I could be with him," Helen replied, with seeming composure, "but I've just decided that I ought to go to Sacramento next week and be with my father and mother."

"For how long?"

"About two or three months."

Mary's eyes flashed. "I think it's very wrong of you, Helen!" she exclaimed, dropping her work and looking up excitedly.

Helen had the self-control to say nothing, perhaps the best answer she could have made.

But Mary was not going to let her off. "Poor old Rob!" she said sorrowfully. "How lonely he'll be! You've no idea of how he is when you're away, Helen. If you had, you'd never think of going. He hardly laughed once all last winter. Oh Helen, just believe me, and imagine how it is! He works all the time when you're away; but he doesn't accomplish anything, even you can see that. Tell me of a single decent picture he painted all last winter! He can't laugh, he can't paint, he can hardly live! Oh Helen, for Heaven's sake give up this expedition! Change your mind for the first time in your life!"

"Don't be impolite, Mary. It's my duty to go, and I shall go."

"Your duty," cried Mary, scornfully. "Your duty'll swallow up your whole life if you're not careful! But where's your duty to your husband gone? I don't see that anywhere." Mary was well launched by this time, and things began to come out which she had kept bottled up for years. "I approve of people loving their mothers after they're married," she went on; "but when they let their mothers manage them, and when they go off and stay with their mothers fully half the time, its too much of a good thing! I may as well say it, Helen; for I've thought it all for a good long while!"

Helen was busily trying to keep the tears out of her eyes. Mary was such a good friend of hers, and usually so sweet and amiable that this attack was a great shock. It did not have any effect on Helen's determination; but it hurt her, and she kept wishing that Mary would stop.

"There's another thing I've got to say before I'm through," Mary continued. "Of course you know your own husband a great deal better than I do; but there's just one thing about him I don't think you've paid enough attention to. He requires an enormous amount of sympathy. You don't seem to give him much when I'm here; but probably you do when you're alone." Mary knew very well that Helen never did. "Well, it doesn't make much difference what you do when you're with him, he adores you so. It's when you go away that there's danger. Robert must have sympathy, and if he can't get it in one place, he'll get it in another. He can't go through another winter as he did through the last. He'll go and find sympathy where you won't want him to, Helen; and honestly, I almost hope he will. I'm very mad with you, Helen!"

## A BAD THING

Here Robert came in, and Mary and Helen, with the talent for acting which you can always depend on in a true woman, covered up the traces of their conversation so that Robert did not have the least suspicion that they had been talking about him and had nearly quarreled, if not quite.

Helen Hazlitt had been married for two years, and knew a great many things about her husband. She knew how to please him or hurt his feelings; she could make him do just about as she liked; she knew what he would do or say when she did or said certain things. But here her knowledge of him stopped. She was possessed of excellent judgment, but was destitute of imagination. Like the farmer who has but one horse, and who is obliged to unharness old Dobbin from the plough and hitch the poor brute to the buggy if he wants to go to town, or to the sulky if he wants to race, Helen had nothing but her steady-going experience, and was obliged to employ it for purposes where sympathy and imagination should have been called in. Before Mary spoke to her so severely, she had never thought of how it affected Robert to have her go away. She had never seen him utterly depressed and unable to work, and even now she did not believe that he ever was so, in spite of Mary's tirade. Experience is like Herodotus. It always tells the truth about what it has seen; but when you apply to it for information about something else it is as likely to tell a lie as not.

Mary Aikenside, on the other hand, knew Robert perhaps better than any one else did, certainly better than he knew himself. When she was ten and he was twelve, they were engaged to each other without their parents' knowledge; and since then, though the engagement had been broken or forgotten, she had always been inti-

## TOO MUCH OF

mate with Robert and fond of him. Thus she had had the opportunity of watching him change from a boy into a man, an opportunity which gives one a key to many a peculiarity otherwise unexplainable. The early engagement came near being renewed ten years later, but Mary discouraged Robert's advances, perhaps because she knew him too well. She always felt older than he, and, in spite of his extra two years, she was his senior in point of character. She loved him as she would have loved him if he had been a younger brother. She was filled with dismay when he married Helen Vail; but she bravely made friends with Helen for his sake.

She soon saw that Helen would never satisfy the passionate thirst for sympathy which was the most noticeable feature in Robert's passionate nature. Mary herself would gladly have given him what he needed, if she had not been afraid that Helen would be jealous of her. During the six months that Helen had been away from her husband, Mary had wisely seen very little of him; and the ardor of his friendship and the effusiveness of his affection when she did meet him convinced her that she was right. When Helen was at home she had no fears. If a woman is fond of a man, she can never understand his falling blindly in love with one whom she considers unworthy of him; but if she is a wise woman, she will accept the fact as true, just as we include the phenomena of electricity with the rest of our knowledge though we do not pretend to comprehend them. When Helen was at home, Robert would obey her, Mary knew; though she had no idea why, having never seen anything especially fascinating about Helen. If Helen went away again, Mary did not know what would happen: she did not like to think.

## A BAD THING

Helen did go away, and Robert was left to keep house alone. He speedily gave evidence of the wretchedness that Mary had described. He tried to work hard, but his heart was not in it, and though he covered a great many canvases, he could paint no pictures. After his day's work he would spend a lonely evening at his solitary fireside, or a still lonelier one at his club. From time to time he wrote his wife long letters full of real affection and affected cheerfulness, letters that were but ill appreciated by Helen, who had a theory that affection was in inverse ratio to demonstrativeness, and who was perfectly confident that she loved her husband better than he loved her. Her letters were models of pithy statement of fact without ornamentation : a sort of Caesar's Commentaries, except that they began "Dear Robert" and ended "aff'ly yours." Such as they were, however, Robert was delighted with them. The South Sea Islander bows before his rudely carved chunk of wood with as rapt a devotion as that with which you or I would kiss St. Peter's toe; and Robert pressed his wife's letters to his lips and read them over and over, and kept them near his heart as reverently as if they had really been something to admire.

"Two months and a little more." Robert calculated the "little more" as probably about five days. That made sixty-seven days. Every morning when he got up, he used to calculate how many days Helen had been away, and how many days it would be before she came back. She had been away fifty-one days when he received a letter from her taking it for granted that she was to be away for three months. It was fortunate for Helen that she had no imagination, and could form no conception of how much pain

## TOO MUCH OF

her "two months and a little more" trick gave her husband. It would have troubled even her blameless conscience if she could have understood the torture that he suffered. It took him several days to regain his customary sorrowful equanimity. Then he changed sixty-seven to ninety and began calculating again.

The third month of Helen's absence was an interminable one for her husband. We laugh at a lover's sorrows as we laugh at the torments inflicted by the dentist; but I never heard any one in a dentist's chair laugh. Robert's day-times were bad enough; but the pretence of work made them pass somehow. His evenings were intolerable, and his nights worse. The men at his club jeered at his long face and sorrowful tone of voice with that hunter's instinct which leads a crowd of jolly men to make an unhappy one a little more unhappy. Mary Aikenside was away in New York. There was no one to give him the kindness and affection which his nature required as much now as when in childhood he fell and hurt himself, and Mary Aikenside used to kiss and comfort him. His craving for sympathy increased every day and took complete possession of him like a drunkard's desire for rum. He felt that he must have some one to love him, some one in whom he could confide. And when he was half frantic with this feeling, there came a letter from Helen, saying that her mother was sick as well as her father, and that she should stay on indefinitely.

It was perhaps fortunate for Robert that he received this letter at his studio on one of his At Home afternoons. He had no sooner finished it than he was obliged to jam it into his pocket while he went to open the door for a troop of fair visitors. As the crowd of guests became larger,

## A BAD THING

he was seized with a feverish gayety, chatted merrily with all his visitors, and laughed at all their jokes and at some things they said that were not jokes. He exhibited an enormous number of his old pictures and poked all manner of fun at them. His guests were delighted with him. "Quite his old self!" they said; and they stayed and stayed. Robert sat down at his piano and sang comic songs for them without any urging, first one and then another. He would not hear of their going, and tried to make every one take three cups of tea. Finally, when daylight was pretty well gone, and he had, as he supposed, bowed out the last visitor, he gave an absurd yell of triumph and flung himself face downwards on the sofa.

"Mr. Hazlitt," said a woman's voice.

Robert sprang up with a forced laugh. "Why, who is it?" he asked. "Miss Morrell? Forgive me, Miss Morrell; but I need not apologize. You have had the opportunity of seeing a great genius off his guard. When asked what geniuses do on such occasions you can say: 'Dive at the sofa.'"

Dotha Morrell took his hand and looked into his eyes, her face full of anxious sympathy.

"What has happened, Mr. Hazlitt?" she said. "I'm afraid you've had some great sorrow."

"Why, that's too bad," Robert replied, still keeping on his mask of jollity. "I thought I'd been a very gay and agreeable host."

"Your behavior may have been agreeable to those who were deceived by your gayety," Dotha said. "It caused me a great deal of pain."

Her great brown eyes gazed up at him with such a look of pity and concern that he was melted in spite of himself. The tears came to his eyes, as they always did when his emotions were roused.

## TOO MUCH OF

"Sit down and tell me what your trouble is," Dotha said softly. "Perhaps I can help you. At any rate it will do you good to get it off your mind. You can trust me."

Robert looked at her curiously. She was a little woman with a strange mixture of sweetness and power in her face, and she evidently had a great deal of magnetism, for he felt that he must do as she said.

"Very well then," he assented in a rather hard, matter of fact tone of voice. "You've been so kind to me, Miss Morrell, that I ought to tell you, if you really want to know. It won't seem much of a sorrow to you. My wife has been in California three months. I expected her back next week, and now she writes that she's to stay on indefinitely. Never having been married, I don't suppose you see anything especial to feel badly about in that."

"Indeed I do," said Dotha slowly. "It's a mistake to suppose that people can't sympathize with what they haven't experienced. You love your wife and have grown to depend on her for your happiness. I should think it would half kill you. It's unnatural. It's wrong. I don't wonder that you feel upset. What makes her stay away?"

"Oh, she can't help it," Robert hastened to say. "I don't want to seem to throw the least shadow of blame on her. Her father and mother are sick and they need her. But I can't bear it much longer. It seems as if I should die!" he concluded, gradually losing control of himself as one does with a sympathetic listener.

Dotha looked at him sadly. "I'm so sorry," she said, and then was silent.

They sat together for some time, saying but little till the clock struck six and Dotha rose to go.

## A BAD THING

"Come and see me while your wife's away," she said. "Come often. Perhaps I can help you pass the time; at any rate I shall always be a sympathetic listener when things seem to go wrong. You will come, won't you?"

"I shall most certainly. And I want to thank you for your kindness and sympathy, Miss Morrell. I don't know—"

"No, don't thank me. You'll do as much for me some day, won't you? My rooms are underneath my studio: you know where that is. Will you come to-morrow evening?"

"Yes. I'll be glad to. To-morrow evening."

And then they bade each other good-bye.

The old Greek tragedies have a heartless way of dealing with right and wrong. If a man is throwing quoits and happens to kill his father by accident, the furies are after him just as much as if he had cut off his father's head on purpose and from the worst of motives. We are all of us more or less like the furies as regards our estimate of wrong-doing, however much we may differ from them in other respects. In spite of Hugo's *Les Misérables*, a crime is usually considered by the world at large as a crime, regardless of the temptations which led up to it or the circumstances which palliate it. A man is blamed as much for running away with a pretty woman as if he went off with an ugly one, although the temptation is far stronger in the first case than in the second. On the whole, it is well that it should be so. A man who commits crimes may be an excellent person, but his propensity for criminal actions, however justifiable, must be discouraged. The world's rough justice makes a number of comparatively innocent persons suffer; but, on the whole, I think most of us deserve a good deal worse than we get.

## TOO MUCH OF

Such were Mary Aikenside's reflections as she came up on the Shore Line from New York to Boston. She was wondering whether Helen's behavior to Robert would drive him to do anything desperate, and if it did, what the world would think of him. It was well on in the fourth month of Helen's absence. Mary, who thought about herself so little that she had a great deal of time to think about other people, had Robert still in her mind as she walked home from the station. By a strange coincidence, she happened to see him just as she was thinking about him. He was on the other side of the street walking with a young woman—Mary could not see who she was. At first she thought it was Helen returned unexpectedly; but no, this woman was shorter than Helen and moved much more gracefully. Was it that Miss Morrell whom Mary had had pointed out to her? Whoever she was, Robert was evidently very much at home with her, for they walked close together, and had the indescribable look that means intimacy. Robert was so much interested in her that he did not look across the street, and his old friend passed unnoticed. Mary did not know what to think, decided to think no more about it, and did think about it all the way home.

That evening Robert came in to call. He had heard at the club from John Aikenside that Mary had returned. His manner had entirely changed in the two months Mary had been away. There was something desperate about him; he was desperate in his gayety, desperate in his cynicism, desperate in his sorrow, desperate in his laughter. Mary was shocked at the change. She had been troubled by the depth of his gloom when she went away, but this was infinitely worse. However, she began to talk to him cheerfully, and

## A BAD THING

before long she was able to form conclusions.

"I passed you on Boylston Street to-day and you wouldn't notice me," she said with simulated indignation.

He looked at her suspiciously, but she was innocently bending over her sewing. "I didn't see you," he replied. "Let's see, I was walking with some one, wasn't I? Oh yes, it was Doth—Miss Morrell."

"Oh, I thought I saw some one with you," Mary observed, looking up. "Why, who's Miss Morrell, Rob? Have I ever heard of her anywhere?"

"Well, you ought to have!" Robert exclaimed, indignantly. "She's one of the best painters in Boston, if Boston people only knew it!"

Mary doubted the fact. She had seen some of Miss Morrell's work and thought it absurdly fanciful. A good deal of it was out of drawing. She had heard Robert himself say so, though his opinion seemed to have changed.

"Oh, I remember," Mary said. "She's the bohemian one. Now Rob, why can't you take me to her studio?—that is, if you know her well enough."

Robert pretended to consider. Oh, Robert, Robert, why do you try to act a part? Can't you see that that woman there who is making believe hem a towel is really reading your every motion, your every word? What are you as an actor beside her? She knows you are infatuated with Dotha Morrell because you admire her paintings: you, who can't bear anything to be out of drawing. She knows you are intimate with her by the way you walked and talked to her. She has dropped in on Carrie Train, Dotha Morrell's friend, and found out that you spend half your time with Dotha, and here you are fool-

TOO MUCH OF  
ishly pretending to wonder if you know Miss Morrell well enough to take a friend to see her pictures! Oh, Robert!

"I don't think she'd mind," he said at last. "She may think it's queer; but we wouldn't mind what she thought!" This last remark Robert considered a masterpiece. "Let's go to-morrow," he added, laughing, as if the whole plan was a good joke. For the first few minutes of his visit the poor fellow had tried to be gloomy, so as to make Mary think he was grieving as much as ever over Helen's absence. Later on he had forgotten his gloom, and now his scare lest Mary should find out how intimate he was with Dotha had brought on a fit of extravagant gayety.

"Is it true what people say?" asked Mary, after a pause, "that Miss Morrell has very revolutionary ideas about society: that she's an anarchist and thinks the present social system ought to be abolished?"

"Why, how should I know what she thinks?" Robert exclaimed with a rather disagreeable laugh. "She may have tried to kill the Czar for aught I know. By the way, what do you think of the new Czar?"

Robert walked down the Aikenside's front steps that evening well satisfied with having put Mary off the scent. Five minutes afterwards Mary walked down the same steps, with a maid for escort, made her way to the Providence Station, and sent off the following telegram:

"Mrs. Robert Hazlitt, 11 Santa Rosa Street, Sacramento, California.

"Come home immediately. Do not wait till I write. If you do not come now you will be sorry till the day of your death. It is to save Robert. Come even if your father is dying.

"Mary."

## A BAD THING

On leaving Mary, Robert stepped round to the club. He wanted to have a talk with Wendell Barstowe, a cynical friend of his with whom he had been a good deal of late. Mary's personality had had such an effect on him that he wanted somebody to counteract her influence. Barstowe was there sure enough, reading a French comic newspaper. Hazlitt sat down by him, and they had a table brought and something to drink.

"What do you think about marriage, Barstowe?" Robert inquired suddenly, holding his glass up to the light.

"In what way?" Barstowe asked seriously. He never laughed at Robert, and that was the reason why the young artist liked to talk to him.

"Why, as an institution, I mean," Robert explained. "Do you consider it as a divine institution or just an agreement like any agreement?"

"I should be inclined to regard monogamy as a part of our particular civilization," Barstowe said, speaking slowly. "The Mussulman has four wives, the monk has none, we have one, or rather you have, I believe, haven't you? I don't see that there's anything especially divine about one system any more than there is about the others."

"Still," Robert objected, "such as it is, it's a part of our civilization, and any one who disregards it—a married man, for instance, who goes off with another woman—is injuring civilization by just so much."

"I'm by no means sure of that," rejoined Mephistopheles. "Marriage is merely one of the temporary results of social evolution. It isn't a stopping place. We must improve in the customs regulating our relations with the other sex just as we must improve in our religion and in our politics. I'm not sure that the man you de-

## TOO MUCH OF

scribe isn't ultimately a benefactor of mankind. It's by just such things being done more and more that our ideas about marriage will become more and more liberal."

"The trouble is," Robert observed, filling his glass again, "that when your benefactor of mankind sets to work and does such a thing, the immediate results are disastrous to all concerned."

Barstowe thought for a while. "No, Hazlitt," he said, "I think you're wrong. It's to be presupposed, of course, that he and the person with whom he departs are extremely fond of each other. The immediate results to them, then, may be assumed to be the reverse of disastrous. With regard to the man's wife, there's at least a fighting chance that she was never fond of him, neglected him, perhaps; such things do happen. In that case, or indeed in any case, she can get a divorce and live to marry another day. As to the world at large, the little episode shows pretty clearly something that the world has never been willing to recognize, that there are irresistible chains of affection and sympathy far stronger, higher, and more divine than any mere earth-born ceremony of marriage, and that they draw two souls together in spite of Heaven, Earth, and Hell. I think it's rather a good lesson for the world to learn. Waiter, bring another bottle. No Hazlitt, I'm paying for this one."

The efforts that are made to keep a man alive when he is in continuous pain and has no chance of ever being free from pain, or better in any way; when he actually desires death, and every one who has his interest at heart desires it for him; are a source of wonder to the thoughtful mind. Religion, Science, and The Law have drawn a line, and no one dares to cross it. We make it a

## A BAD THING

rule to keep body and soul together as long as possible in all cases, lest, if we once give ourselves the power of hastening death, we come to abuse the fascinating privilege. Our system is one of self-distrust. We prefer that a certain number of sufferers should continue to suffer rather than that we should incur the temptation of doing wrong. We err on the safe side, as the man did who put off shooting his horse for a day in hopes that the animal might learn in that time to walk on the two legs which were not broken. But we do err, and we know it. If an asylum of insane incurables was blown to atoms while the officers and keepers were away, our first exclamation on reading our newspapers would be: "How dreadful!" our next, "I'm glad of it!"

Helen's father was the victim of a slow paralysis which had already invaded his brain. Whatever pleasure it gave Helen to be with him, it certainly gave him none to have her there, for, in spite of what Mrs. Vail had said in her letter, he evidently had not the smallest idea of who his daughter was. Except for a certain excitement, apparently not pleasurable, which his wife's appearance in the room aroused in him, he seemed to be conscious of nobody's presence. Helen sat with him all the morning with her embroidery and a book; Mrs. Vail took her daughter's place in the afternoon; and at seven o'clock the trained nurse installed herself for the night. About half the time Mr. Vail lay in a listless torpor; about half the time his face showed that he suffered acutely. The doctor said that he might live a year, and that he might live ten.

The time passed slowly for Helen. Though she was accustomed to slight the countless affectionate attentions of her husband, and really

## TOO MUCH OF

thought that she despised them, she missed them now that she had to get on without them. In spite of her unemotional nature she was one day conscious of a distinct thrill of pride when she happened to reflect that none of the men she met in Sacramento was as able, as distinguished, or as entertaining as her husband. "I wish Robert was a little neater," she added to herself. She would have written to her husband oftener except that she knew very well he would come to expect more in the future; so she abode by her old rule of three letters a fortnight. Robert's letters she read with a certain amount of real interest. Of course she heavily discounted his expressions of affection; her inverse ratio maxim obliged her to do that. But Robert's letters could bear discounting. They were burning with passion, and so full of Helen that he hardly told the simplest facts about himself. Helen read them with a rather supercilious smile, but she was distinctly glad to get them. She began to look forward to the time when the three months would be over and she could be back in Boston again. Once she actually saw Robert in a dream, and wondered if he ever dreamt of her.

It was curious how subservient Helen was to her mother, for she was never subservient to any one else. But Mrs. Vail was a person of method, and by a rigid and systematic control she accustomed her self-willed daughter so completely to obedience during her childhood that Helen never got out of the habit. For Helen, though she had a powerful will, had a still stronger instinct of conservatism. Her younger sister Alice, whom she had bullied to her heart's content when they were children, and whom Mrs. Vail had many a time reduced to tears by a frown or a shake of the head, had become much more indepen-

## A BAD THING

dent of her mother than Helen was, now that both girls were married. Alice formed a kind of club with her husband to resist her mother's encroachments, while Helen still sailed under maternal colors.

"Do you think I'd better go by the Union Pacific, Mother?" Helen asked at the breakfast table one morning. "Or what do you think of taking the Southern road and dropping in on Cousin Florence at Santa Barbara?"

"I think you'd better put it off, my dear. I haven't been myself for the last week, and to-day I think I shall take to my bed. Robert can spare you."

"He says he's very lonely," Helen observed, rather timorously, working hard at her sewing. "He says he was almost heart-broken when I wrote that I was going to stay the third month."

"Well, my dear, that's to get you home that he says that. Robert's an affectionate husband, a good, affectionate husband; but he musn't try to control you too much. Write him the truth, dear. Tell him that I'm sick and that you must stay on indefinitely. Then it will give him a nice surprise when you say you're coming."

Helen worked a while in silence. "Poor Robert!" she said at last, shifting her embroidery in its frame.

Mrs. Vail laughed. "Yes, poor Robert!" she said good-naturedly, "and poor You, and poor Me, and poor Father! We've all got our trials, Helen, and I'm thankful that not many have to suffer as I do. Give my love to Robert, dear, when you write."

Another month went by, and things began to look as if Helen could go at last. Mrs. Vail's health improved; Mr. Vail remained very much the same; there was nothing to keep Helen back.

## TOO MUCH OF

In fact she would have started already, but that her mother suddenly formed the idea of going east with her. She needed a rest, she said, and this was just the time to take it, before her husband was in immediate danger. Helen was glad to have her mother go, but was sorry to have her own departure delayed, for Robert had not written for some time, and, though not prone to foolish fears on his account, she thought it just possible that he might have met with an accident.

At last a letter from Robert did come. It was a rambling letter, full of disconnected pieces of news and uninteresting anecdotes. But he had suddenly stopped in the middle of a sentence, and the last few lines made Helen's heart beat.

"I wish you'd come home, Helen," Robert said. "I'm getting sort of desperate, and I can't depend on myself. A good many things have been going on this last month that I haven't told you about. Probably to-morrow I'll be sorry I wrote you this. But take advantage of it and come back before it's too late. I'm your husband, you know, after all. If you don't come, I shall think—well, I shall think the truth.

"Still your loving husband,  
"Robert Hazlitt."

Helen went right to her mother and told her that she would have to start for home that very day. She showed Robert's letter by way of warrant. But Mrs. Vail explained away a good deal of what frightened her daughter. She pointed out that there was nothing definite said: only obscure hints that might mean anything or nothing. The things that had been going on in the last month might perhaps mean that Robert had

## A BAD THING

once or twice drunk more than was good for him, but they probably had some reference to his pictures. Nowhere was there a definite request that Helen should come immediately. Even if there had been, Mrs. Vail's new clothes would be ready in three days, and three days was really "immediately" in the case of such a long distance. As to the "Still your loving husband," that did not mean that he would ever cease to be so; on the contrary, it indicated that whatever happened, Helen might be confident that Robert would always be "still her loving husband."

Helen listened, argued, would not be convinced; and at last agreed to wait three days, if her mother would promise to let her go then even if she herself was unable to do so.

The next day Helen wrote Robert the most affectionate letter she had ever written him, and after she had sent it off, her heart was lighter. The morning of the second day, Mary's telegram was brought her as she sat by her father's bedside. On reading it she ran into her mother's room and showed it to Mrs. Vail.

"I must go to-day, mother," she said firmly. "I promised to wait three days, but I don't care. I'm going to break my promise."

Mrs. Vail read the telegram. "Ah, from Mary Aikenside, I see. I never liked Robert's intimacy with that girl: she always seems to be seeing faults in people. You'd much better wait till to-morrow, Helen."

"I won't," said Helen, and walked out of the room.

In spite of Helen's rudeness, Mrs. Vail went east with her daughter. The new dresses had to be left behind, but her devotion was equal to

## TOO MUCH OF

the sacrifice. Of course she could not help reproaching Helen. Helen bore all that she said with meekness, or rather with callous unconsciousness, and was not rude again. Day after day of the long journey passed, while Mrs. Vail chattered pleasantly and Helen sat thinking, not always of what her mother was talking about. She was so preoccupied that her mother grew anxious about her, yet her health seemed good; she certainly never complained. She did not begin conversations, either about Robert or any other subject, and she would not join in when her mother began. She hardly answered questions. After a few days of this torture of an unsympathetic companion, Mrs. Vail made friends with the Episcopalian bishop of Arizona and his wife, who occupied the section opposite. "Such interesting people, dear, seven unmarried daughters and one son who was devoted to them all, but is now insane!" After Mrs. Vail had made these acquaintances, Helen was left, for the greater part of the time, to her own reflections.

Just before the train reached Denver, Helen told the porter to bring her a telegraph blank. She wanted to telegraph to Robert. She thought a long time and then wrote as follows:

"I am coming as fast as I can. I think of you all the time. Everything is my fault. Forgive me, Robert.  
Nelly."

At Denver she called the porter again. "Will you please send this telegram?" she said. "Wait a moment, I'll just read it over first."

She read it, blushed, thought a minute, then tore it to bits and threw the pieces on the floor.

"You needn't wait," she said to the porter. "I've decided not to send it."

## A BAD THING

It was a quick journey. Mrs. Vail was pretty well exhausted and wanted to stop over a day at St. Louis, and again at Chicago. Helen was iron. Her mother might stop over if she liked, but she would have to stop over alone.

Long before the train reached the Boston station, Helen was on the lowest step of the platform, in spite of the remonstrances of the brakeman. She had telegraphed Robert from New York, asking him to meet her. When the train entered the station, she jumped off while it was still going, and began to run about searching for her husband. It was early in the morning; but a considerable crowd was assembled to meet the train, a crowd which gradually disappeared by twos, threes, and fours, as each traveler was surrounded and borne off by a laughing, shouting, and kissing circle of friends. Helen noticed especially a young wife who had come to meet her husband. "Oh, Harry, you've been away two whole days!" the girl cried, as she flung her arms round him and kissed him with the disregard for onlookers which is sanctioned by the usage of railroad stations. "Two whole days!" Helen repeated to herself, and a lump came into her throat. She did not give Robert up till every one had disappeared, and her mother and she were alone on the platform. Then she ordered a carriage and told the driver not to mind the trunks, but to drive to the Apartment House in Beacon Street as fast as he could.

The elevator boy at the Apartment House said he did not know whether Mr. Hazlitt had spent the night at home or not; he could not remember. He was sure that Mr. Hazlitt had had some trunks sent away the morning before; but whether Mr. Hazlitt himself had gone out of town he did not know. Helen shuddered at what he said

## TOO MUCH OF

about the trunks. She and her mother went upstairs in the elevator, and Helen opened the door of the apartment with her latch-key. She called Robert's name; but there was no answer. Leaving her mother in the parlor, she ran down the long passage to the bed-room. The door was open. Robert was not there, and the bed was untouched. The pillow-shams had not been removed, so she knew that Robert must have told the chamber-maid that he should spend the night away from home. She looked round the room. None of Robert's clothes were lying about as they usually were. There were three unopened letters on the bureau in a pile. She picked them up, and as she did so her hand trembled. The first was the affectionate letter she had written from San Francisco telling Robert that she was coming in a few days. The second was the telegram she had sent him from New York. The third was addressed to herself in Robert's handwriting. Her heart beat fast and her fingers still shook; but she managed to open it. It was dated the day before.

"Dear Helen," Robert wrote, "I have written to you at Sacramento, but I leave this letter here because you may be on your way home, though I do not think it probable.

"You and I made a great mistake when we married each other, Helen. I have never been anything but a source of annoyance to you, and you have never been able to give me that sympathy which I need, though perhaps I do not deserve it. It is not your fault that you cannot love me. I do not blame you. But I have found a woman who does, the woman whom I ought to have married. She and I have decided to spend our lives together, and you will probably never see me again.

## A BAD THING

"I should feel that I was doing you a great wrong if I did not know that after the first shock you will be far happier living at Sacramento with your mother, as you always preferred to do. Were it not for this, I never should have taken such a step, and Dotha Morrell would have been the first to dissuade me from it."

The last part was written more hurriedly.

"Yes, you and I made a great mistake. You, I'm sure, have never been to blame, but have always done what you supposed—Oh, Nelly, I may be committing a great sin; but I can't help it—I don't know—I can't think—Anyway it's too late. God bless you dear. I never shall give up praying for you. Can you ever bring yourself—Oh, Nelly, Nelly, why couldn't you love me?"

Robert."

Helen dropped the letter and stood perfectly still, her lips pale, her hands clenched.

Mrs. Vail came in. "Has Robert gone out of town, Helen?" she asked. "I should think he might have been at home when he knew you were coming back!"

Helen took hold of the foot of the bed to keep herself from falling.

"Will you kindly leave the room, mother?" she said. "I want to be alone."

## FRANCIS PARKMAN

With youth's blue sky and streaming sunlight  
blest,

And flushed with hope, he set himself to trace  
The fading footprints of a banished race,  
Unmindful of the storm-clouds in the west.  
In silent pain and torments unconfessed,  
Determination written on his face, .

He struggled on, nor faltered in his pace  
Until his work was done and he could rest.

He was no frightened paleface stumbling  
through

An unknown forest, wandering round and  
round.

Like his own Indians, with instinct fine  
He knew his trail, though none saw how he  
knew,

Reckoned his time, and reached his camping-  
ground

Just as the first white stars began to shine.

LUCY







# THE TWO SIDES OF A PROMISE



“For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.”

Time hates the abnormal; great sorrows and great joys are alike an abomination to him. Give me enough millions of years, and I will roll up my Sisyphus stone as contentedly as you thrum your morning lesson on the harp. Give me enough millions of years, and my glass of nectar will taste no better than your mug of hot water. If you were to fling the Winged Victory of Samothrace and Charlie Peters’ hump-backed sea-nymph over the rocks into the sea, the waves would soon jostle them both into a few round pieces of marble. And so when twenty years have washed over your wedding day, and thirty over your brother’s funeral, both will be reduced to a few old memories. I would as lief look back on an unhappy past as a happy one—provided it be far enough away.

Time had an able auxiliary in effecting the recovery of Lucy Fellowes from the shock of her mother’s death. This ally was Lucy’s unselfishness. For sorrow at death is for the most part selfish sorrow. Take a houseful of us at a funeral with our handkerchiefs at our eyes. What are we crying about? Because we think life will not be so pleasant for us now that our friend is dead. I suppose very few of us cry because we think the departed has gone to Hell. But an unselfish man is fortified against personal grief. In usurping a part of the pains and pleasures of

## THE TWO SIDES

others, he loses a portion of his own. He has, as it were, invested half of himself at a safe distance, and it is only the other half that is open to attack. Deal him a mortal blow, and you have killed only half of him. Time and unselfishness helped Lucy to come to herself so quickly that she was ashamed. Her father's recovery was slower. Time accomplished it unaided.

Strangeto say, though Mr. Fellowes was overcome by real grief at his wife's death, his thoughts went back to the funeral with a sort of ghastly pleasure. Some persons think there is nothing worthy of interest or attention in a funeral or a wedding except the fact that the interested parties are joined in marriage or put into the ground, as the case may be. Such was not Mr. Fellowes. He regarded a wedding or a funeral as an extremely important thing in itself, entirely apart from the interest that attaches to it because someone is buried or married. He felt it very necessary that the distance of relatives from the coffin or from the bridal pair should vary as the distance of their relationship. He took a genuine interest in arranging his wife's funeral; and his mortuary labors really helped him to bear the shock of her death. The poor man's sense of the importance of etiquette could not prevent him from breaking down in the midst of the service. But in other respects the funeral was a success.

The widower's withdrawal from business was a great mistake. Work would have distracted his mind. He said Lucy ought not to be left alone all day. Lucy would have preferred his absence, though she did not dare to say so. A woman ought to be her own mistress from nine o'clock till five. In giving up his business, a man throws away the talisman that makes him seem delightful to his womenfolk. As a wise woman once

## OF A PROMISE

said: Men are like lamps; they shine at night, but they ought to be out daytimes.

Lucy declared she would never marry until her father died. Now Mr. John Fellowes was fifty-five, and as hale a man as there was in New Haven. There was every prospect of his living till he was ninety. If he did, Lucy's vow doomed her to celibacy till she was sixty. At that age she would doubtless have become wise enough to select an excellent husband. Perhaps a man might be found who desired an experienced help-mate. Lucy admitted that most girls who say they will not marry, do marry, after all; but she maintained that she would not—which was possible. She declared that she was different from other girls, and she undoubtedly was. I suppose that every separate pebble on the beach is a little different from every other pebble; and yet each does just about the same thing as its companions: that is, it waits until some one comes and claims it. Mr. Fellowes did not look upon Lucy's self-denying ordinance with such horror as might have been expected. He accepted the sacrifice, feeling very sure that it would prove to be no sacrifice. To live with him was not, in his opinion, an undesirable fate. He held that girls are much surer to be happy with their fathers whom they know than with strange young men whom they don't. He even went to some pains to sustain his daughter's determination. He took care to be present whenever a young man was calling on Lucy, on the ground that when there are three in the room it is difficult to be agreeable and impossible to propose. The Lord had taken his wife from him, and he had bowed his head; but he did not propose to let anyone else depopulate his family.

Mrs. Fellowes died in September. When the

## THE TWO SIDES

following June came round, Lucy was asked by her father to choose a place where they should spend the summer. Cotuit, which had hertofore been their summer home, had too many heart-breaking associations. The widower declared that it was now a matter of indifference to him where he lived, and that Lucy might take him wherever she chose. Lucy made four suggestions, which were all vetoed. Her fifth plea was for Europe.

"I'll tell you what, Papa!"

"Well?"

"Let's go to Europe! Wouldn't it be fun! And this is just the time! Can we? I believe I should go crazy! Oh, Papa! We could go to Paris and to Dresden"—

"And you shall go some day, my dear. You shall go everywhere you like. Only this summer the state of my investments is not—not quite—in short I think we might better defer your idea—not give it up, but defer it. And now, Lucy, before you decide definitely where to take me, I want to tell you of a letter I have just received. Mr. Morton Tyler has written to ask if I should not like to live in his country house for the summer. It is at Monotaug, Rhode Island. You could not imagine a more delightful spot: the house itself is on an eminence with the ocean in front and beautiful lakes and woods behind. You remember, perhaps, that I was there several years ago for some two or three days. It is a quiet locality. There are no neighbors but the Kirkes of Philadelphia—excellent people. What do you think, dear?"

"I think it would be charming, Papa. It sounds very attractive."

"Decide for yourself, Lucy. I shall not influence you one way or the other. I only say by

## OF A PROMISE

the way that the place is perfectly adapted—no, I will not say it. I shall leave you free. I want you to make your decision entirely without reference to me. Do you really want to go there?"

"Yes, I do, Papa, honestly."

"You really want to go there more than to any other place?"

"Certainly I do, as long as you—Yes, I do."

"Very well, my dear. Then we may regard the matter as settled."

Monotaug proved to be a charming home for any one who did not mind loneliness. Like every summer resort, it was superior to all other summer resorts. I have been fortunate enough to come upon a description of the place in a pamphlet written to point out the advantages of the Conantuck Hotel which lies a few miles further to the westward. After reading this account, I should no sooner think of describing Monotaug myself than I should think of writing a poetical description of the Fall of Man.

"The diminutive hamlet of Monotaug," writes the Proprietor of the Conantuck Hotel, "is as cute a retreat as any in broad R. I. Its charms are twofold: viz.: marine and sylvan. He who is sick of watching 'the stately ships go by' can seek quiet in the secluded valleys in shore. He, on the other hand, who is wearied by the strain of the wood-mosquito can drown it in the thunder of the 'everlasting sea' after walking one mile.

"The song of the bird is heard daytimes and of whippoorwills every night and the post office is only five minutes' walk. But superb as are the natural advantages of the spot, society vies with nature to make the spot 'beloved of God and

## THE TWO SIDES

man.' Few dwellers in 'Little Rhody' have attained to years of discretion without hearing of Morton Tyler, Esq., once candidate for Governor of this State. Less well known, perhaps, in this section is the Kirke family; but it is safe to say that every inhabitant of the Quaker City knows, and is proud of, their own gallant Brevet Brigadier General Philip Q. Kirke. The scenery is chaste and the climate healthy."

The morning after Lucy and Mr. Fellowes arrived at Monotaug, Lucy rode to Conantuck on her bicycle. Philip Kirke, the eldest son of the Brevet Brigadier General, was sitting at the window when she passed. He looked up, hurried out of the room, mounted his machine, and caught up with her before she had gone half a mile. Lucy, who had met him the night before, blushed when she heard his voice behind her. Women's feelings are so hard to read that when you want to know whether or not a woman likes you, it is necessary to come upon her suddenly, and to notice carefully if she blushes. If she does, she may like you and she may not.

Lucy looked well on her bicycle. She did not wear black when she was riding. On this especial morning she had on a short skirt of dark blue serge, blue canvas gaiters, russet shoes, and a white shirt waist striped with blue. For the benefit of whatever ladies may be reading these pages, I will say that she had three other bicycling costumes at home. These I will not describe, my sartorial muse being already exhausted by her short but unaccustomed flight. Lucy was below the medium height and inclined to be slender. She had light hair, a complexion that the summer sun had turned into a satisfactory brown, and blue eyes which sur-

## OF A PROMISE

prised you by being clearer than any one else's. She rode gracefully but slowly, so that Kirke had no difficulty in coming up with her.

"Pardon me for disturbing your solitude, Miss Fellowes. I hope I haven't interrupted a sonnet."

"Not at all, Mr. Kirke. I have been studying the stones in your Rhode Island roads—a sort of surface geology."

"How well you ride!"

"Please don't, Mr. Kirke. I'm sure to fall off when I feel big. I'd much rather run into a stone than into a compliment."

"Now come, Miss Fellowes: one would almost think you came from Boston!"

"Why; are Boston girls such exquisite riders? From Boston? No, indeed: Boston's Harvard. A New Haven girl would be mobbed there. Where did you go to college?"

"How do you know I've been to college?"

"Because you have a superficial politeness and an innate sense of superiority."

During the remainder of their ride, Miss Fellowes and Mr. Kirke talked about themselves. This style of communication is from one point of view useless; from another extremely profitable. If it be assumed that the object of conversation is mutual instruction, Phil and Lucy would have done better if he had pointed out to her that the country through which they were riding was a terminal moraine, while she repaid him by explaining to him the origin and evolution of Yale University. Such would probably have been a conversation between Miss Maria Edgeworth and Mr. Jacob Abbott. But if the object of conversation be that those conversing may know each other better, then they had better talk about themselves. People do not know

## THE TWO SIDES

each other any better because they have explained things to each other. You may talk to your neighbor for ten years about comparative osteology and the habits of birds, and not find out till the end of that time that he beats his wife every Saturday night on principle. This little fact, learned from a quiet personal talk over a cigar, helps you to a true appreciation of his character far more than all your ten years' controversy over birds and bones.

Never did hero have a fairer chance to win a golden prize than Philip Kirke had that summer at Monotaug. True, there was a dragon in the case, but a dragon who spends part of his time in New Haven need hardly be taken into consideration by a resolute hero. There was also, to be sure, a sort of assistant dragon, a certain Mrs. Watson, who nominally guarded the precious fruit when the real old hydra was away; but she had that unfortunate tendency to sympathize with handsome young heroes which has so often proved fatal to female dragons. The great hydra kept trying to overcome the young champion with the flames and vapors that came out of his mouth; but, as we all know, heroes are in the habit of going about dressed in armor of proof; and they are only a little annoyed at dragon's breath, very much as you or I might be a trifle put out by being obliged to ride in a smoking car.

Mr. John Fellowes had driven away a considerable number of heroes from his daughter by disagreeable remarks and overbearing demeanor; and this made it all the more unpleasant for him now that he had come across a champion who refused to be overcome by these mis-siles. For such weapons, like the Australian's

## OF A PROMISE

boomerang, are extremely dangerous to him who uses them if they chance to miss their mark: they come hurtling back again, and, if the thrower does not look sharp, he is apt to get a broken head. Mr. Fellowes at last began to see that he could not hit Kirke with his well-worn boomerangs, and that he must think up something else. Meanwhile he kept on throwing boomerangs, with disastrous results to himself. All weapons have their day, and it is extremely disagreeable for those who happen to be using them at about eight o'clock in the evening.

Let no one infer from what I have said that my hero was anything remarkable. The Reader, who is doubtless well up in current literature, has probably observed that the age of the Lord Orvilles and the John Halifaxes has gone by. We have to put black spots on our heroes nowadays, just as the old-fashioned beauties of Bath and Epsom did on their complexions, so that the unspotted parts may shine the brighter. This custom, indeed, has been carried so far that the Reader may be thankful to have secured a hero who is not all spot.

In the first place Philip Kirke was not pliant enough for this tornado world of ours where the wind is blowing forty miles an hour half the time, and where it sometimes gets as high as seventy. It's fine to see the staunch old oak trees standing up to their work while the little birches bend and quail before the hurricane; but, good Heavens! walk through the woods after the wind has gone down, and who's standing up then? Why even the very grass is laughing at that old oak who has fallen on his head; and the poor fellow certainly doesn't look very dignified now: who can, with his feet in the air?

For another thing, Kirke thought a great deal

## THE TWO SIDES

too much about his clothes. His family might have kept a rough sort of time by the costumes which he wore at different times of the day ; and his boots, as if they had been made of chameleon skin, were red in the morning, black in the afternoon, and patented at night. Such devotion to self-attire is seldom the accompaniment of an expansive mind. Mr. Gladstone's collars are now out of style: I know not whether they ever were in it. Mr. Carlyle, it is true, wrote a book about other people's clothes; but I doubt if he ever thought much about his own. Cæsar was well dressed, but if the only thing a man wears is a toga, I should think almost any one might have a rather nice one. There are other things better than clothes; and while we think of clothes we are not thinking of these. Clothes must swallow up our bodies: let them not devour our minds! I would not seem to advocate brogans and the absence of a neck-tie. Let every man be neat; and if he has taste, let him use it; but let no costume be so elegant that the admiring observer forgets that there is a man within. As to Phil, he made too much of an effort. Heroes ought to dress well spontaneously, just as a peacock has better clothes than an ordinary cock without trying.

Picture to yourself a laughing morning in July. Put in plenty of clouds, and paint them with straight gray bases and humpy white backs scurrying across the sky before a southwest sea breeze. Imagine Mrs. Watson and Lucy driving down to the beach with an elegantly dressed dark-haired cavalier riding beside them on a bay horse. Put plenty of pink morning glories on each side of the road; and pepper with red the long grass just beyond the stone walls to show

## OF A PROMISE

that it will be ready for the mowing machine to-morrow or the day after. Don't paint in any trees, for there aren't any trees. Set down three or four coasting schooners and a rakish steam yacht on that reach of blue water ahead, stretching from Point Judith on the east to no one knows where on the west. Now give us the roar of the Atlantic just loud enough to be heard above the clang of the horses' hoofs. There: that's right.

"How well you ride, Mr. Kirke!"

"Malicious! But I'm glad you said it."

"Why?"

"Because in the first place it shows you think I'm worth being made fun of; and in the second—Whoa, Roy!—it's a compliment, and entitles me to give you one in exchange. If Mrs. Watson weren't here, I should say that I never saw you looking so splendidly as you do this minute."

"Why should my being here make any difference, Mr. Kirke?"

"Because you're a matron, and matrons are supposed to frown on compliments. But perhaps in cases where they know how it feels, they don't object to their little charges' receiving them."

"I'm not a little charge! I take charge of Mrs. Watson; don't I, Mrs. Watson?"

"You certainly never do anything I tell you, my dear."

"Now that's too bad! I appeal to you, Mr. Kirke. Aren't I—I mean, Am I not obedient?"

"Wait a moment and I'll see.—Be fond of me, Miss Fellowes!"

"Certainly, Mr. Kirke, since you wish it."

"That's a good girl. I'm afraid you're wrong, Mrs. Watson: she really is obedient."

Monotaug Beach is a part of the long stretch of hard sand that extends from Point Judith to

## THE TWO SIDES

Watch Hill without a break. To the east the Monotaug bather can see the white tower of Point Judith light house: to the south he looks out upon the high shores of Block Island, breaking the monotony of the ocean horizon. The ten or a dozen members of the Monotaug Fishing Gang make their home in a ridiculously small house perched on the sand bluff, with a green schooner sailing above it by way of weather-cock. When Phil and the two ladies walked down to the shore, they had to step cautiously so as not to entangle their feet in a seine that was spread out over the soft sand. The net was broken here and there, and half a dozen fishermen with bare feet sticking out of their oilskin trousers sat silently mending it. They nodded to Phil as he passed, but the advent of the ladies had no effect on their hats. Two old fellows had hauled their boat down to the shore and were just putting out to sea. In spite of stiff legs they climbed in promptly; and sat politely facing each other, one backing while the other pulled. Boarders had driven over from Conantuck and were bathing with the shouts and motions characteristic of non-swimmers. Children were making sand forts with a grave demeanor which contrasted strangely with the splashing and shrieking of their parents.

"I wish you'd criticise my swimming, Mr. Kirke."

"Well; all right. There—that's good—slower—keep your hands together longer—never mind that, keep it up—what did you stop for? I'll tell you the trouble, Miss Fellowes, you don't kick out viciously enough."

"Well, I'll try again. There!—is that any better?"

"Yes, that's better—No it isn't either! Why

## OF A PROMISE

don't you get mad with the water? The trouble is with your character, Miss Fellowes. You're so much used to giving in to people that you won't even treat the water badly."

"I didn't ask you to criticise my character."

"Well, you can't swim without character."

"Fishes do."

"Yes, but that isn't a parallel case. It doesn't take any more character for a fish to swim than for a woman to walk; but you take a woman who can swim well or a fish who can walk well, and there you have character."

"Something which you think I don't possess."

"I don't mean that at all. All I mean is that you're a great deal nicer to people than they deserve, and that your amiability extends to the ocean. Just remember that the Atlantic likes to be kicked, and then kick it."

Lucy hated to be present when Phil and her father were talking. Neither of the women knew or cared about the other's characteristics or tastes, yet such is the unconscious genius of those who dislike each other that the most astounding knowledge of character combined with the most devilish ingenuity and malice could not have devised more annoying things than they managed to say to each other. Philip Kirke was a first-rate fellow, and Lucy's father was not without a good point or two, but when they were together they seemed like Satan and Beelzebub trying to stamp on each other's toes. For the characteristics of a compound depend on the reaction of the constituent parts, not on the nature of those parts. Saltpetre is an innocent substance; and charcoal too, though black, is harmless; but put them together and make them talk, and there's the devil to pay.

## THE TWO SIDES

There is about as much use in trying to make one of our friends like another as there is in telling a boy to like onions. Either he will like them or he won't: trying to make him renders him suspicious. A friend, like farmer Anderson's old mare, is a hard horse to drive even if you know how. "Ef you strike her in the hinder parts, it ain't goin' to be any use whatever; but ef you hit her for'ards, MAYBE she'll go."

Lucy's attempts to make her father and Phil like each other had the same effect as a few feeble blows administered on the hinder parts of Mr. Anderson's mare. Perhaps the most injudicious thing she did was to tell Phil that he reminded her of her father. It was hard for Phil to bear this even from Lucy; and the only comfort he could get was by letting fly an extra number of satire-poisoned arrows at the old gentleman the next time they met. Mr. Fellowes responded with a broadside of boomerangs, and for half an hour or so there was a very pretty battle. The fact that Lucy was between them, and that whether their missiles reached their aim or not they always hit her, did not occur to either of the combatants.

There is a state—I know not whether to call it happy or unhappy—wherein two young people see nothing but each other; hear nothing but each other; feel nothing but each other's presence—and as for tasting and smelling, they do neither. Are they in Heaven? Surely not; for they think of no one but themselves, and for the most part they are wretched. Are they in Hell? No; for they would not change their state for any other. Are they insane? Yes, but temporarily and with a healthy insanity: a good thing to be through with, like the mumps. Each sees

## OF A PROMISE

the other through a magnifying glass, and really thinks that all other observers are mistaken. All the world loves a lover—but with an unrequited love. For the lover, by means of that same magnifying glass of his, captures all the burning rays of affection that radiate from his heart, and converges them on one insignificant person, while all the world else may go shiver for all he cares. Fools? Like enough; but we all have been fools of that sort, or else are going to be. As for me, I confess that when I see a man lovesick, I feel like the author of "The Saint's Rest" when he saw a jail-bird escorted to the gallows. "There, but for the grace of God, goes Richard Baxter." "What!" cries the reader, "And is there then no hope? Must every one be such an idiot?" Yes, yes, Reader; and so don't make a fuss about it. Every one must be; and if you and I never have been, it's because we're young.

Why was it that Lucy and Phil fell in love? Well, why is it that the ivy trembles and laughs and dances when the summer rain falls upon it? Why does the old horse start like a three-year old when he catches sight of the bright-shirted jockeys and the grand stand and the long white fence? Why does the thrush make the lake a paradise when the sun has gone down, and the wind has died away, and the evening star has turned from white to gold? Why does a good woman take you by the hand and look into your eyes and tell you that she, at least, believes in you? You know, don't you? Well that was the reason.

It was in the early part of August that Phil asked Lucy to be his wife. They were sitting under the trees on the shore of a little pond. It was a secluded place—perhaps no one had been there since one of King Philip's warriors sent a squaw down to gather water-lilies. Lucy was

## THE TWO SIDES

reading aloud, something of Stevenson's. A cat-bird was singing in an alder bush behind them. A turtle was dreaming of Heaven on a sun-baked rock close by. Blue dragon flies danced through the air or balanced on the tips of slender water-weeds. Suddenly a kingfisher flew chattering across the pond. Lucy glanced up from her book, and blushed to find that Phil had been looking at her. Then it was that he spoke and she answered him.

Heaven and Hell, though differing in some important points, resemble each other, I imagine, at least in one particular. In both places, the shock of arrival probably subdues for a time the excessively keen emotions which the soul would otherwise experience. Philip Kirke's sudden entry into a temporary paradise was too much for his faculties. For hours after he left Lucy he did not know what he was about. He was much in the condition of a man who has been deprived of reason by some terrible grief, except that such a man gropes because it is dark, and Phil could not see because there was too much light. He wandered off among the hills, and, lying back among the huckleberry bushes, looked up at the sky, thinking of nothing at all—or was it everything? Scraps of what Lucy had said began to recur to him: broken phrases all alive with the emphasis of her voice. He repeated them aloud. Then he lay still again, looking at the clouds and remembering how she had put up her lips dutifully like a little child when she bade him good-bye.

Endymion doubtless thought it a wonderful thing that Diana should fall in love with him; and I must confess I agree with him, for of all the little pink and white heroes I ever heard of,

## OF A PROMISE

he was the worst. Philip Kirke, too, chose to regard it as an astonishing fact that Lucy preferred him to all the other young men in the world. It would have been astonishing if it had been true. But, as Phil would have seen, if his head had not been in the clouds, Lucy had not made the acquaintance of all the youngmen in the world; and, if she had, she would probably have preferred several thousand of them to Phil. The necessary smallness of a young woman's acquaintance is a most fortunate circumstance for those of us who may be described as Nature's Commoners.

After some hours of paralytic rest, the sensations proper to Phil's situation came bounding upon him like a pack of hungry wolves. But in order adequately to describe the thoughts of a lover, it is necessary to fall in love yourself; and much as I wish to oblige the Reader, I cannot undertake to carry my complaisance to such an extent. I will, then, merely say that Phil had the feelings of an accepted lover, whatever those feelings may be, and the Reader, who is himself, perhaps, in a position to understand them, may sweeten according to experience.

In the evening Phil walked up to Lucy's house. He found her alone in the drawing room. She was reading at a little table. She had on the same white waist and black walking skirt that she had worn in the morning. A faded spray of azalea that Phil had picked stood on the table by her side and made the room over-sweet. When she heard his step, she started up, dropping her book on the floor. Her face was white and there were tears in her eyes. He had never seen her look so plain: she was almost ugly. He felt from her expression that she was afraid of him: hostile

## THE TWO SIDES

to him. She did not shake hands, and kept the table between them, as if she feared that he would try to come nearer. Then she stood looking at him, her hands clenched, her face a picture of distress. Phil knew somehow that his dream had come to an end. He forced himself to smile.

"Well, Lucy," he said with an approach to coolness, "I was sure this morning's happiness couldn't last. What is it? I suppose you've changed your mind?"

Lucy's words came without expression as if she had learned them by heart.

"I had no right to say I would marry you, and now I want you to give me back my promise."

"Oh, certainly. Delighted, I'm sure. May I ask why?—Or possibly your motives, though excellent, are hard to explain?"

"I promised my father only a few months ago that I would never marry while he lived."

"Oh, that's it? So you never meant to marry me? I beg your pardon! I thought you were in earnest this morning. I assure you I've been in heaven for the last few hours: quite a little paradise! And the rest of my life is of no consequence. How came you to try such an ingenious experiment? Just to see what I'd do?"

"I ought to have told you, but I loved you so much that I could not—and I thought Papa would change. I have appealed to him, and he holds me to my promise."

"And how about your promise to me?"

"That was no promise, for to carry it out would be to break a promise I had already made. I will carry it out in so far as I can. I shall never marry any one—Phil, and I shall love you all my life."

"Oh, don't trouble yourself about that: please don't! Marry any one you like; and as to your

## OF A PROMISE

affection, I have received such overwhelming proofs of it to-day that I must confess I should really feel more comfortable if you bestowed it on some one else. Pardon me for not being more impressed by your promises, Lucy; but you see it's just possible that you promised your father the opposite only a few months ago. In such a case the more recent promises are no promises, and must be broken immediately."

"Don't be cruel, Phil."

"Cruel? That's the last thing I shall be. Just wait a minute while I promise you a few things to calm you down. I tell you, there's nothing in the world like promises! I hereby promise to love you all my life; but don't believe me, for yesterday I promised another girl the same thing. I also promise to fling your father into the pond; but that I can't carry out either, for only a few months ago I promised not to touch him with a ten-foot pole.—Look here, Lucy, what are you talking about? Do you really mean to say you won't marry me till your father dies? Why, the man may live fifty years!"

"I hoped I should be able to persuade him to let us marry if we were willing to live with him, but"—

"Live with him! I'd rather live with the devil!"

Here Kirke looked round and saw Mr. Fellowes standing behind him. But the young man was wrought to a pitch too high for embarrassment.

"Pardon me, Mr. Fellowes. I just observed that I'd rather live with the devil than with you. I should not have said so if I had known you were in the room. But your daughter has been behaving so strangely that I am not quite master of myself. You see this morning she prom-

## THE TWO SIDES

ised to marry me; and now she says she won't. What should you advise me to do?"

"I should advise you to leave the house, Mr. Kirke—to go home as soon as you can."

"Excellent advice, sir; and I shall not be slow to act upon it. But first just a word, for I want you to understand what to expect from me. Some men in my position would follow your daughter about and annoy her, and eventually persuade her to marry them in spite of her conscience and your—regard for your own interests. I shall not. Your daughter has said she will not marry me. I take her at her word. She says she will never marry any one else. I do not believe her. At any rate, I shall make no such statement. People say a man gets over these things. Naturally it seems impossible to me; but if I ever do get over it, I shall thank God, and if I find a good woman willing to marry me, I shall marry her. I am at least not fool enough to suppose that just because one woman is false, all women are so.

"And now you'll be glad to learn that I'm about to bid you good-bye. I hope you'll permit me to take that liberty, for I doubt if I shall ever see you or your daughter again."

He shook hands with Mr. Fellowes, and then turned to Lucy, who had not moved since she first rose from her chair. She let him take her hand.

"Good-bye, Lucy."

She was silent.

He went out of the room and then out of the house. He had not taken a dozen steps along the avenue when Lucy came running out from the front door. At the piazza steps she checked herself. She could see his form disappearing into the blackness.

"Phil!"

## OF A PROMISE

He must have heard, but he did not look back.

Lucy never upbraided her father for what he had done: she merely formed a new opinion of him. Life became a foolish ironical dream to her. She wandered listlessly about the house forgetting the little duties which had once made the day so short; neglecting the dexterous touches with which she had once made the house into a home. She listened with grave inattention to her father's profound commonplaces. Like the Spartan boy, she gave no open sign that something was eating her heart. She even smiled sometimes, when she thought it was expected of her. Once she laughed. It was when her father was reading the paper aloud and skipped a passage about Phil's going to California.

She dreamed about Phil every night. He was never angry or sarcastic in dreams, but always as he had been that morning by the pond. In the day-time he was constantly in her mind, no matter what else she was thinking about; and she was not foolish enough to try to expel him. Her thoughts came back to him as a matter of course after every excursion, just as Cato's speeches were all brought to a close by "Carthage must be destroyed." She did not blame him for the cruel things he had said to her: she wished he had said more so that she might have more to forgive.

She wondered what sort of a woman he would marry. She did not expect him to wait long before he fell in love again, but she hoped he would wait as much as two years. She wished she could see the woman he would choose. There were so many things she had to tell her: little things she had noticed that Phil liked. And then she remembered how even before Phil had asked

## THE TWO SIDES

her to marry him, she had foolishly thought over what sort of house they would live in, and how she would arrange the parlor, and how she and Phil would sit together on the sofa in front of the fire-place—and then it all came over her that they would never sit there together, and a sob burst its way out, and the tears began to gather, and she did not wipe them away, for she was safe in her own little blue room where no one could get at her.

“She’ll be tall and dark,” she went on to herself, “for he’ll want her to be as different from me as possible. I hope she’ll be nice and he’ll be happy with her, but I’m glad he loved me first, for he did love me. ‘I haven’t thought of anything but you for a long time, Lucy,’—that was what he said.—Tall and dark, I think, and she’ll carry herself well: he can’t bear people that stoop. And she’ll be very true and constant. He said he didn’t think all women were—were false just because I was so. I wasn’t false, Phil! Didn’t you know that when I called you back I was going to give myself to you promise or no promise? And you wouldn’t look round!

“Let’s see, she’ll be tall and dark,—but not very sympathetic, I’m afraid.—I wish I could see her!”

Mr. Fellowes did not concern himself much with his daughter’s sufferings. As he observed to Mrs. Watson, he had seen a great many persons disappointed in love, and they all had got over it sooner or later. Why grief should be disregarded merely because it is temporary, he did not explain. Possibly he reserved his sympathy for those of his friends who had reached a place where suffering may be regarded as tolerably permanent.

## OF A PROMISE

But though he had character enough not to grieve over Lucy's little disappointment, somehow he could not manage to derive the pleasure he ought to have had from knowing that he had done the right thing. The consciousness of perfection is like a wife, not quite so exciting after you have had it for fifty years. He met General Kirke out driving, and instead of answering his bow the general scowled, swore, and drove on. When a man is treated like that abroad, he needs consideration at home. But something had got into his womenfolk. Mrs. Watson behaved queerly. He explained carefully to her how what he had done was for the best, but though she really tried, she could not understand. He felt it rather hard that Lucy, who had always given him sympathy when he did not want it, should refuse it just when he needed it most. It was a disagreeable position, but some men know what to do in an emergency. And just as Napoleon, when he found he was not appreciated in Russia, left his army to go to rack and ruin and hurried back to Paris, so Mr. Fellowes left Monotaug to mourn for him and took the express train for New Haven.

It was very quiet in the house on the hill after he had gone. Mrs. Watson had had disappointments herself, and she knew what Lucy felt. With a self-control greater than William the Silent ever showed, she put a bridle on her kindly, gossiping little tongue, and let Lucy dream her dreams in peace. She dragged her plump little body over the hills and picked wild flowers for Lucy's room. In the evening when Lucy sat on the piazza watching the stars come trembling into the sky, Mrs. Watson would sit beside her, holding her hand in a gentle motherly way, and looking at her from time to time to make her

## THE TWO SIDES

smile. At night she went down on her knees and prayed for Lucy. And although she was a squatty little woman without much of a figure, somehow the idea of her kneeling down there by the bedside doesn't make me want to laugh. Women aren't very good things to laugh at, anyway.

Mrs. Watson did not know much. She did not even know that a crushed strawberry dress is not becoming to a woman of sixty. She had a vague idea that Alexander the Great was a Czar of Russia; and she never could remember whether it was King Alfred or King Arthur who burnt the cakes. She was distinctly commonplace. But somehow or other she had got it into her head that when a woman is enduring a great sorrow, she wants to have people love her and doesn't want to have them talk. And acting on this knowledge she said very little to Lucy and loved her with all her might. And commonplace women can beat the world at loving, God bless them! and I think that's one reason why we take our hats off when we meet them.

One evening, perhaps a week after Mr. Fellowes' departure, Mrs. Watson and Lucy were sitting on the front piazza looking at the last streaks of the sunset fade out from the sky. Lucy was in a long deck chair, while her comforter sat close by in a seat that was her favorite because it had such short legs. A tree-toad was gallantly trying to hold his own against two crickets, but the crickets were getting the better of him because they could spell each other. As it grew darker, the light-houses began to stare at them like distant Polyphemuses, first Point Judith, then one of the Block Island Lights, then the other, then Montauk, far away to the west. Point Judith and Montauk kept winking: the

## OF A PROMISE

other two glared. Just the least suspicion of a breeze sprang up. Lucy shivered, and Mrs. Watson brought her a wrap. From the ocean there came a quiet murmur, so low that they would not have heard it in the day-time. The outline of Scorpio began to come out above Block Island. The wind died away. Lucy disengaged her hand from her shawl and held it out to the commonplace woman beside her. Mrs. Watson took it into her comfortable little keeping without a word. The silence became more complete. Even the crickets and the tree-toad stopped at last, and nothing was left but the passionless requiem of the ocean.

Wheels crunching the gravel! Who could it be? Not Mr. Fellowes, surely: he always wrote to say when he was coming. Mrs. Watson started up and strained her eyes to see who it was; while Lucy, who did not care if it was Mr. Cleveland, lay back in her chair watching Scorpio. The carriage drew nearer—it was one of the railroad station carry-alls—in the front seat no one but a driver—two passengers behind—one was Mr. Fellowes.—

“It’s your father, Lucy; but who’s the lady with him?”

Lucy rose slowly and waited without excitement for the carriage to stop. The driver pulled up his horse, and Mr. Fellowes got out, turning round to give the lady his hand.

“Well, Lucy, here’s the little visitor I wrote you of,” he said, his voice trembling in an unnatural way.

As the stranger stepped down from the carriage, Lucy recognized her in spite of the growing darkness. She was a certain Virginia Hasbrouck, a girl whom Lucy had known slightly in New Haven. Lucy remembered her as being

## THE TWO SIDES

handsome and a little underbred. What was she doing here?

Miss Hasbrouck mounted the piazza steps. Lucy gravely held out her hand.

"I'm very glad to see you, Miss Hasbrouck," she said. "I hope you'll excuse what must seem to you a cold reception. I never received the letter Papa speaks of, and so I didn't know you were coming, but it doesn't make a bit of difference: everything's all ready and I'm delighted to have you here."

What was the matter? Instead of replying, Miss Hasbrouck only giggled. Mr. Fellowes seemed embarrassed. Could it be that they were engaged?

Lucy was about to introduce her unexpected guest to Mrs. Watson when suddenly Miss Hasbrouck burst out laughing.

"Well, I declare, John!" she cried: "If that isn't the worst! I believe I forgot to mail your letter! No wonder Lucy never got it!"

Lucy and Mrs. Watson looked at each other.

Mr. Fellowes coughed, and seemed even more uncomfortable than before. "I see that some explanation is needed," he began, ponderously. "I am sorry you did not receive my letter. That would have prepared you for what must now prove a surprise—I hope not an unpleasant one." He coughed again. "Lucy; you and Mrs. Watson have perhaps made some surmises as to the object of my frequent visits to New Haven. I did not inform you at the time what that object might be, for fear I might be disappointed in it. Fortunately"—here he smiled at Virginia—"fortunately I was not.—Lucy, I want you to understand that everything is to go on as before. Virginia is prepared to love you as a sister, and I do not want you to think that she makes any

## OF A PROMISE

difference in my love for you. 'Not that I love Caesar less, but that I love Rome more.'"

He paused. Lucy's brain swam. Was he going crazy? Virginia threw back her head, laughed aloud, and then came to a sudden stop.

"What he's trying to say is that we're married," she said shortly, and burst out laughing again.

Lucy's heart gave an angry leap. She could not think. She felt weary, sick. Her body began to sway to and fro a little, and Mrs. Watson took her arm that she might not fall.

Mr. Fellowes felt bound to go on.

"I don't mind saying, Lucy," he said with a nervous little laugh, "that I did not tell you of the wedding till after it had taken place, because—because I feared you might not approve; especially as your recent disappointment has—very excusably—rendered you temporarily not—not quite sympathetic. I was afraid that you might imagine that both you and I had voluntarily debarred ourselves from the right of marrying. If you reflect, I think you will remember that I never actually made such a promise. Indeed, six months ago the apparent impossibility of my present bliss"—here he smiled again at his wife—"would have seemed to render such a declaration unnecessary. Perhaps a promise was implied.—That was what troubled me. In fine, I did not wish to pain you by telling you of my glorious crime before I could show you the splendid apology!"

He might have been speaking Welsh for aught Lucy knew. But when he had ended she made one fierce effort, leaned hard on the kind arm that supported her, recovered herself at last, and stood erect.

"I think you have never met Mrs. Watson,"

## THE TWO SIDES

she said to Virginia.—“Mrs. Watson, this is Mrs. Fellowes. And now you must be tired, and it’s cold and dark out here. Come upstairs and let me show you your room.”

When Lucy came downstairs a moment later, she found her father in the hall waiting to talk with her. He took her hand.

“Of course you are to live with us, my dear,” he said, hurriedly. “Virginia is especially desirous of it. And I don’t want you on any account to think that I have forgotten your mother. Virginia does not wish me to do that. Your mother”—

He was interrupted by a cry from upstairs.

“John! John!” his wife called from the banister. “Just come up to our room a minute! I want to talk things over! I do think it’s all the best joke I ever came across!”

I should like to end my story here, but I see that before it comes to that, I must obliterate a false impression that the Reader’s mind has somehow received. The Reader seems to think that it was all Mr. Fellowes’ fault that Phil and Lucy did not marry each other.

Now, without saying a word in favor of Mr. Fellowes—who was, as Horace Greeley once said of a man, “one of the least of God’s mercies”—I think I can show that others were to blame as well as he. And, in the first place, what right had Phil to put on that “Take me or leave me” tone with the woman he loved, and go stamping off like a third rate actor just because things were a little black, and the poor child wavered for a minute? Why, if he had turned round in the avenue when she called him, and said “Lucy!” in a way that I can’t imitate, but which he had right at his tongue’s end, she would have come running down the steps into his arms, and it

## OF A PROMISE

would have taken more than that pompous old idiot in the house to separate them after that! But no! Phil's back was up; and he must have the pleasure of keeping it in that position even if he broke his own heart and Lucy's too. The little fool! There's not a back in the world that won't bend—aye, and break, too, if Fate has a mind to break it. I declare the boy got what he deserved, and I should be glad of it, if it wasn't for Lucy.

And yet, although I cannot help being fond of Lucy, I must say I sometimes lose patience with her, too. Of course it was very grand, her sticking to her promise and sending poor Phil to the right about, but what business had she to make that scurvy promise in the first place? I tell you, Reader, we have no right to draw cheques of that sort on our futures. When I hear, as I often do, of a girl going on oath again and again that she will never marry because her uncle is crazy, or because she has an invalid mother to take care of, or because her grandmother was a negress, it makes me positively sick. Oh, it's easy enough to go swearing about, resigning a flimsy indefinite lover that you never saw; but when you find that a living, breathing man is telling you that he loves you, when you feel his great strong hand grasping yours, and see tears in eyes that haven't known them for twenty years, and hear plain words of reverence and love coming hot from his honest old heart, then it is that you begin to lose interest in that ass of an uncle!

By all this violence I do not wish to distract the Reader's indignation from Mr. Fellowes. In fact I rather like to see that gentleman put on the defensive. It is pretty obvious that he had no right to marry after he had prevented Lucy

from doing so. His splendid apology was not splendid enough. Mr. Fellowes, however, as I before took occasion to remark, perhaps to the Reader's surprise, was not without his good points. He almost never swore, and he never over-reached a man in business unless it was quite excusable and he could make a pretty good thing of it. He was rather mean to the young men who came to see his daughter, but they had no especial reason to complain, for he was mean to a great many other persons, too. And as to his treatment of Lucy, most fathers dislike having their daughters married, and do a little—a very little—to prevent it. Very likely there is some good, adequate, unselfish reason for it. Perhaps, Reader, as they used to say when we were children, "We'll understand when we get older."

## SIXTEEN

A sweet ignorer of the laws  
Of etiquette and rules of dress,  
And ten times prettier because  
She knows not of her prettiness!

With childish ardor unrepressed  
She chatters in her girlish way,  
And never doubts our interest  
In everything she has to say.

She tells us just how much she spends:  
She talks about her dog and horse,  
About her best and next best friends  
As if we knew them all of course.

It seems as if all things combined  
To make her radiantly glad:  
Every good time is to her mind  
The best good time she ever had.

What though the Future beckon her?  
What though her youth must pass away?  
Are not the flowers the lovelier  
Because they only last a day?

And yet, when perfect buds unfold,  
We softly grieve for what has been;  
Dear Alice, must you too grow old?  
Can you not always be sixteen?



## ANTAEUS IN LOVE



The first time Harold Vaughn met Emily Rogers was at Hereford Neck, on the shore of Connecticut, in the summer of 1885. They were both visiting Mrs. McKinney, and saw each other constantly for two weeks. Harold went away first. On the day that he left the Neck he was in a fair way towards falling in love. He liked Miss Rogers better than any other woman he knew. If a further acquaintance should confirm a two weeks' impression, he thought he should ask her to marry him. While the train hurried him to Boston, he could see her in his mind's eye as she had stood on the McKinnys' piazza waving him a farewell. She had worn a sailor hat with a white ribbon, a white shirt-waist with blue stripes, and a dark blue skirt; and her simple apparel seemed perfect to Harold,—for Emily Rogers was one of those who lend elegance to any costume. She was tall, dark, and handsome. Hers was a face that took precedence; it was by no means perfect when she was alone; but when surrounded by other faces, it was apt to be the handsomest.

After leaving the Neck, Vaughn did not see Miss Rogers again for two months. As soon as he heard that she had returned to Milton for the summer, he took the train and called on her. As he anticipated, she was not one to forget a friend. Her greeting at Milton was as cordial as her farewell at Hereford. She asked him to come again,—and he did. His Hereford estimate of her was sustained: it could not be exalted. She

began to fill his thoughts more and more. She interfered with his work. When he imagined he was looking up something in the Massachusetts Reports, he would suddenly find that he was thinking of Emily Rogers instead. He lost his interest in the other girls he knew. He paid absurd attention to little points of behavior in which she had hinted that he was deficient. He stopped himself from doing several mean things by asking himself how Emily would like it, and in each case told her about it afterwards. He attributed to her a degree of excellence which she did not possess, priding himself all the time on his critical insight into her character. He called her "Miss Rogers,"—but always thought of her as "Emily." He looked conscious when he spoke of her. He was in love.

There was no reason in the world why Harold Vaughn should not marry, provided he found some one to his liking who would marry him. He was twenty-eight years old. For so young a lawyer he had an excellent practice; and his father was rich and generous. In such circumstances it is no wonder that as soon as he was sure that he was in love with Emily Rogers, he determined to marry her. He had been too uniformly successful in everything he had undertaken to be very doubtful of his success. When he was at the primary school, he had determined to take the prize in spelling, and he had succeeded. At the Latin School, he had determined to be first in his class and half-back on the football team, and again he had succeeded. On graduating, he had determined to be the first lawyer in Boston, and, when he was twenty-eight, it would have been hard to point out another lawyer of his age with a practice like his. He was used to success. It would have been affectation

## IN LOVE

if he had pretended even to himself that he was afraid Emily Rogers would not marry him.

Harold Vaughn was a great schemer. Most young men drift on and on through the days of courtship, without any definite plan, till finally they gain sufficient courage to ask their lady loves to marry them. But Harold Vaughn never drifted. Whatever he was doing, he always laid a plan of campaign; and even when he was in love, this military habit did not forsake him.

Miss Rogers was devotedly attached to her family. She had a great respect for their opinions. If he could win his way into the family, if he could make himself necessary to them, if he could make them all fond of him, he did not doubt that he could carry his point. The influence of a girl's family is tremendous. Their jeers and criticisms turn the scale against many a baffled admirer. May not their praises establish the success of a suitor who probably would not fail even without their assistance?

Mr. Rogers was a successful commission merchant with a large income. He was stern, and his wife was mild. Their three children were as fine a set of young people as you would wish to see. Emily was a noble-minded girl of twenty-three. Alice was twenty-one. She was of gentler mould than her sister; most people thought her the prettier. Harold thought otherwise. John Rogers was a spirited young base-ball player of fifteen. Taken all in all, it was a healthy, happy family, with a great deal of mutual affection, a fair share of brains, and plenty of money. There was a very strong family feeling among the Rogerses, and a corresponding lack of interest in other people. They were all critical, each in his own way; and visitors who heard others criticised could not help feeling that they would

come in for their turn as soon as their backs were turned. Mr. Rogers and his family lived sumptuously. They had a magnificent house, large and elegant grounds, and everything they wanted.

Mrs. Rogers took a great liking to Mr. Vaughn immediately, so that all he had to do with her was to confirm a good impression. He talked to her sympathetically about her family troubles. He found that she had a literary turn, so he read her Austin Dobson's poems while she mended her husband's stockings. He gave her advice about the management of John, who had just reached the age where he began to give her uneasiness. He found that she wrote verses, and he read them with some interest, for they were rather good.

"Why, you haven't been here for almost a week, Mr. Vaughn!"

"No. I've been obliged to run on to New York. I'm glad you missed me."

"Cruel! I'm so sorry the girls are out."

"I'm not."

"Now, really, Mr. Vaughn, that won't do. You may be very fond of my company; but you would hardly like to have Emily and Alice hear that you prefer it to theirs."

"That's true, so don't tell them. I've brought you the new "Harper." I want to know what you think of this poem in it."

The trouble with Alice was that she was too amiable. She was critical enough in her own fashion, but when people were present she was always nice to them. She was nice to Vaughn among the rest, but for the life of him he could not guess what she said of him when his back

## IN LOVE

was turned. It was evidently necessary to do something extraordinary to win her favor. Harold made her the confidante of his future. All the daring schemes which he had made, some of them reaching to the President's and Chief Justice's chairs, he confided to her. And every interesting case he had he told her about in a very entertaining way. She could not help being interested in him. Often she was more excited than he over the pending event of a trial.

"Well, Miss Alice, Weeden's agreed to come to terms."

"Oh, dear! I wish you could have fought it out! What does your client pay him?"

"Two thousand eight hundred."

"Oh, Mr. Vaughn! Wouldn't it have been better to have put the case through?"

"It might, I thought not. You know a conscientious lawyer's chief concern is to prevent litigation. I think two thousand eight hundred is fair for my client. If I were Weeden I shouldn't be satisfied."

"Oh, if I were only a lawyer!"

"I should probably lose half my business."

Mr. Rogers was generally considered a hard man to get at. It took Vaughn some time to find out the reason, but he discovered it at last. Every one was afraid of Mr. Rogers. Harold determined to be the exception to this rule. He boldly entered Mr. Roger's private sitting-room and smoked a cigar with the merchant. He listened respectfully to the older man's political views, but gave emphatic reasons for totally disagreeing with them. He made Mr. Rogers tell him anecdotes about his early life, and listened as if they were interesting. Mr. Rogers grew to think

him "obstinate but intelligent, really intelligent"; for Mr. Rogers was one of those people who repeat twice any word or sentiment that pleases them.

"Ah, Vaughn, glad to see you. Take a cigar. Vaughn, I want to talk to you about something. I think of sending John to boarding school."

"Well, Mr. Rogers, I think that's the worst thing you can do."

"Your reasons, Vaughn, your reasons! You young men are too hasty."

"In the first place, he loses his home influence. In the second, he learns to smoke and drink, and to swear as only boarding school boys can. In the third, he doesn't get such good teaching as at the Roxbury Latin School, where I want you to send him."

"There's something in what you say, but not everything, Vaughn; something, but not everything."

With John, Harold had no trouble. John formed his opinion of a man largely on his skill in athletics. Harold joined in some of the boy's sports, just enough to show him that he could beat him at everything. He showed him how to pitch a base-ball with a very deceitful drop; he played tennis with him, and never allowed him more than one game in a set; he took him down to the Union Boat Club and taught him how to row a working boat.

"John, you'll never learn to play tennis unless you give up striking the ball with a cut."

"I think a cut's a good thing. It makes 'em bounce badly."

"Nonsense! It only makes them bounce badly

## IN LOVE

on a soft court like yours. If you'd ever played at Newport, you'd see cuts didn't do much good. You want to strike them all hard and square, and place every ball you hit."

Such were the measures which Harold pursued; and he was uniformly successful. The whole family was glad to see him when he came, and kept begging him to come oftener. It grew to be an acknowledged custom for him to stay to supper. He often spent the night. The family grew dependent on him for a great part of their amusement. The ladies lived a somewhat secluded life, and Mr. Vaughn knew everything and everybody. He brought them their new books. He took the girls to college athletics. He went with the family to the theatre. He could be depended upon as a standby at a dancing party. He grew to be a modified kind of brother. He was admitted to family gatherings where no one else but relations was allowed. He walked in at the front door without ringing, and was on the best of terms with the servants. He called Emily and Alice by their first names; and all the Rogerses called him "Harold," except Mr. Rogers, who never went beyond "Vaughn." In short, Harold had succeeded in the first part of what he had undertaken. In order to marry Emily Rogers, he had determined to become a friend of the entire Rogers family; and now he had met with the success that resolution deserves. He was confident that in his attack upon an army of equal force he would have four staunch allies.

It was on a summer afternoon three days before the Rogerses left Milton for Narragansett Pier that Harold left his office with his mind made up to strike the fatal blow. He had told

Emily through the telephone that he wanted to talk to her alone about something very important, so he was pretty sure the coast would be clear. His confidence in his success had forsaken him lately,—at least of immediate success. He knew she liked him, but he could not read any further into her mind. Emily was not one to be easily read. She had an excellent control over herself, and if she was in love with Harold she certainly never showed it. But Harold was fond of bold strokes. If she were in love with him, she would accept him; if not, he would find it out, and no harm done.

They walked along the garden path in silence for a time while Harold arranged his brief.

"Emily, I think you're the finest girl in the world."

"Then you're mistaken, Harold."

"No, I'm not! And I want you to marry me, Emily. I know I don't deserve you; but just think what we could do together; just think"—

"Oh, don't go on, Harold, don't go on! I was afraid of this; not till lately, though. I used to think you were just fond of me in a brotherly way, the way you are of Alice; but lately"—

"Emily, don't you care for me at all?"

"Of course I do, but not in that way."

He had taken her hand in his first impulsive address to her, and she had not withdrawn it. She withdrew it now. Harold bit his lip. It was the hour of defeat; but he would not admit that he was beaten.

"I suppose I can still be your friend, Emily."

"I shall think it very kind if you don't desert me," she said; "but we may as well end this subject here and now. I don't want you to misunderstand me. I'm sorry to say I've had some experience in these things. I like you very much,

## IN LOVE

Harold; but I will never marry you,—never, never! Do you understand?"

"I understand, but I don't believe it, Emily."

And with that he turned on his heel and walked away.

So this was the end of the first act of the drama.

She had a good enough opinion of him, but not the kind of opinion he wanted. He had been better off a year ago. Then she might have fallen in love with him, if he had started matters right; now she considered herself incapable of loving him. He must change his tactics, that was clear. His being a friend of the family did not seem to have helped him much. His four allies did not seem to have been of much use. They had doubtless been of influence in making Emily like him; but she liked him in a very unsatisfactory way. However, he might as well keep his allies, now that he had had so much trouble over them. They might still be of some assistance to him, and then, besides, he had grown fond of them for their own sakes. After all, he was not entirely dissatisfied with his position. He had hoisted his colors, and now Emily knew that he was a lover, and not a friend.

After the Rogerses had left Milton, Vaughn had the whole summer for arranging his next campaign. He thought over the reasons for his failure, and all possible ways for converting it into a success. The trouble was, he had been too much of a friend and too little of a lover. That must be all changed. He must be more open in his attentions. He must give her presents and write her verses. He might make a fool of himself; but doesn't a girl like a man who makes a fool of himself for her sake? He had always treated her very much as he treated the rest of

the family. That system must be changed. He would show his preference now. He would make his calls on Emily, not on the Rogers family. He would see what a little genuine, open-hearted devotion would do. After all, the most straightforward way to win a girl's heart is to make yourself as agreeable to her as you can. That is the simplest recipe, and the best.

When the Rogerses came back the next autumn, Vaughn went out to welcome them home. Even on his first call, a close observer might have noticed a difference in his behavior from what it had been the year before. His conversation was now directed almost entirely towards Emily. He went to Milton often, as often as the year before, but his calls were on Emily, not on the family. He seldom stayed to supper; he generally came out in the evening, asked for Emily, and devoted himself to her almost exclusively until he went away. Of course every one noticed the difference: he wanted them to. He talked to Emily in a different style, too, from the way in which he had conversed with her the year before. He humbled himself to her. Her opinions were the correct ones; his were subordinate. He allowed her to contradict him, and acquiesced in all her decisions. His legal friends would hardly have recognized their opinionated and overbearing comrade in this meek young man, submitting with a perfect grace to surprising statements which his iron brain and heartless logic could have overturned in an instant.

"I'm afraid I'm coming here too often, Emily. I hope I don't bore you."

"No. You don't bore me at all; but I think that perhaps it would be better if you didn't come quite so often."

"All right, then, if you say so, I won't come

## IN LOVE

quite so often. Oh, Emily, I want to tell you how glad I am that John isn't going to boarding school!"

"I'm not glad at all; I think it would be the best thing he could do."

"Yes, I don't doubt it would be good in many ways. But—well, you ought to know best, you know him so much better than I."

"Well, then, I wish you hadn't advised papa to send him to the Roxbury Latin School. I did my best to prevent his going, but of course I couldn't do anything with papa."

"I'm very sorry. Your father asked my advice, and I gave it as well as I could. I didn't know what you wanted then."

When Emily had the measles that winter, Vaughn sent her flowers twice a week; none of your carnations or violets, but beautiful boxes of roses, a different kind each time. When she was well again, he sent her candy till she told him to stop. He took her and her mother to matinees at the opera. He went to every dancing party that she went to, and danced with her as often as he dared. He took riding lessons, and, when he had acquired a decent seat, went riding with her. He took her to walk Sunday afternoons. He formed as good an opinion of her different girl friends as his conscience allowed, and talked to her about them. He tried to persuade her to tell him about music and harmony. He used up five or six hours writing her a valentine. He made himself rather ridiculous in a hundred ways; but as he was a person whom no one but Emily dared to laugh at, he experienced very little ridicule.

Devotion from such a person as Harold Vaughn was well worth having. Emily seemed to enjoy herself very much that winter. She ev-

idently felt that she had done her duty by Harold in telling him that he had no chance. If he continued his advances, his blood was on his own head. He was so humble and deferential with her, and so utterly at her mercy, that she gradually became more haughty with him. That is inevitable in human intercourse. "There is one who kisses, and another who holds out the cheek." Emily might have met Harold half way if he had not met her seven eighths of the way. The winter had passed, and it was May before Harold tried his luck again.

"It's almost a year since I asked you to marry me, Emily."

Silence.

"Haven't you changed your mind in that time, Emily? Isn't there any hope?"

"Really, Harold, you annoy me very much. I thought I told you then that you would never have any chance."

"But you might change your mind."

"I never change my mind."

"Perhaps you never have, but you will some time."

Both were standing up and looking each other in the eye; and, as Harold finished and turned away from her, Emily felt for the first time in a year that possibly he had as strong a will as her own.

The plan of being a humble and devoted lover had failed. But difficulties never disconcerted Vaughn. When he was a boy at school, he had chosen a motto and written it under his name in all his books: "Failures are my stepping stones." Although he was disappointed, he was glad to get over the meaching lover business. It

## IN LOVE

was not like his real self, and he always preferred to act in character if possible. His next scheme was more exciting and more difficult. He determined to make Emily jealous. Of course it must be her sister Alice of whom she should be jealous. He thought he could manage it. There would be one unpleasant thing connected with the plan. He would not see nearly so much of Emily as the winter before; in fact, he must avoid her. This inconvenience, however, would be temporary. He perfected the scheme in the summer, and when the Rogerses returned to Milton he was for the third time ready for action. He had rather neglected Alice the year before; but it did not take him long to make up. She had always liked him, and now that he seemed to become so fond of her, she liked him better than ever. He renewed his attentions of the year before, but with a new object and in a lesser degree. He realized for the first time how much easier it is to study a girl's character when you are not in love with her. He came to know Alice through and through,—Alice, who was always considered so inscrutable. He discovered that she had always been fond of attentions from men, but had concealed this feeling under the veil of indifference. He found that she had high ambitions,—to become a great painter, a great singer, a great actress,—but that she concealed these aspirations even from her mother. He came to the conclusion that her heart must have been touched several times.

Emily looked on his attentions to her sister with apparent pleasure. Whether her pleasure was assumed or not, he could not tell. She spoke to him several times about how glad she was he had found out what a nice girl Alice was. Once or twice he thought her displeased when he left

a chair by her to go and sit down beside Alice. Of course there was a tremendous danger of overdoing the business. He must not make Alice think that he was in love with her; he must only make Emily think he was in love with Alice. He managed this with remarkable skill. His conversation to Alice was frank and brotherly, never romantic. He even remarked to her that he could not imagine their falling in love with each other. She understood perfectly well that he did not care for her in a loverlike way. And yet to Emily they seemed devoted to each other.

It was not till spring that Vaughn showed his true colors again. Then he veered round completely. He was glad to do it, for he felt like an incorrigible hypocrite. Emily seemed surprised, but not displeased. About a week after the change, he made his third attack.

"Have you changed your mind since last spring, Emily?"

"About what?"

"About marrying."

"I thought you must have changed your own mind."

"Emily! Were you sorry?"

"No. I was very, very glad. But now I'm very sorry to see that you did not care for Alice, after all. I must say I think you've behaved shockingly! shockingly!"

"No, I haven't. She never thought I was in love with her. By the way, Emily, are you in love with anyone else?"

"I must say, Harold, you're very impolite to ask such a question. I certainly sha'n't answer it."

"Oh, very well! Just as you like. You never seem to answer my questions as I want you to; but some day you'll think better of it."

"Never!"

## IN LOVE

Two days after his third rebuff, Vaughn started for Europe. Sometime before, he had announced to the other members of his firm that he should probably go abroad for a year, and all the necessary arrangements for his departure had been made, although if Emily's answer had been different, of course he never would have gone. But now he had a mind to see what absence would do for him. Here he had been hanging about Emily for nearly three years, and she had become accustomed to him. If he went away, perhaps she would miss him. She could hardly fail to miss him a little; and the little might grow so that before he came back she would miss him a great deal. He determined not to write to the Rogerses at all. Emily would miss him more if she had no news from him. He might be sick, or he might die, and these dreadful possibilities would befriend him. With any other girl than Emily he might have been afraid that some other suitor would appear and be engaged to her before his return. But he knew Emily well enough to be sure that it would take any man more than a year to win her affections. She had such a love of home and such a distrust of anything strange, that it was impossible for her to become engaged all of a sudden. Harold had certainly adopted rather a Spartan method of winning her love. If she had missed him a tenth part as much as he missed her, she would have taken the first available steamer for Hamburg and the next train for Dresden. But he had been accustomed to be master of himself all his life; and though he wished himself in Milton on the average about thirteen times in a day, he did not go there till he had been in Europe for over a year.

It was a perfect June day when Harold walked up the Rogerses' avenue for the first time in

thirteen months, and met Emily coming out of the house. The fountain was playing on the lawn. The sparrows and robins and catbirds were seeing which could sing the happiest song; and Emily seemed as happy as they, as she ran down the steps and out on the avenue, holding out both hands to welcome him and saying,—

“Oh, Harold! I’m so glad you’ve come back!”

“Are you really, Emily? And you’re going to give me a little hope this time?”

“Harold! haven’t you got over talking like that? No indeed, not the least hope in the world! I was going to say ever so many nice things to you; and now I can’t say any of them!”

“I don’t want you to say any nice things, except one.”

“Harold! Don’t you think I know my own mind? I’m sure I’m old enough. Here you’ve been bothering me for years”—

“Yes, and I’ll keep on for fifty years more if necessary. You’d better give in, Emily. I’ve made up my mind.”

“Never!”

It was now the summer of 1889. Harold had to all appearances been on a wild-geese chase for four years. Emily’s last “never” had been as emphatic as her first. “Can it be possible,” thought Harold, “that some of those other men stand in my way?” He mentally reviewed them, and devoted himself to thinking up some mode of getting rid of them. That summer he was for the first time invited to spend a week with the Rogerses. He went down, but had an unsatisfactory visit. Emily seemed displeased with him, presumably on account of his never-ending perseverance. Alice had never liked him so well since he had been so devoted to her and had

## IN LOVE

suddenly stopped. He confessed to himself that she had reason to be displeased with him. He was not at all sorry to pack up his bag and go back to Boston again.

When the Rogers family came back to Milton, he began to think seriously of his rivals. The first that drew his attention was Mr. Zimmerman, a young lawyer, who used to talk to Emily about religion. He was conscientious to a fault. Harold once asked Emily why Mr. Zimmerman had not gone into the ministry. She replied that she thought good men were needed in all professions, especially in the law. She was irritated with Harold, and with reason, because of his treatment of her friends. He always seemed to be laughing at them, and worse than that, he made her want to laugh at them, too. As to poor Zimmerman, Harold took a mean advantage of his conscientiousness. They were calling on Emily together one evening, forming one of those painful "*partis à trois*" made up of a girl and two discordant admirers, where it is hard to tell which has the worst time of the three. At last Zimmerman had the sense to go; and, much to Emily's surprise, Harold rose at the same time, and said he would go with him. They walked home to Boston together. Harold poured out to Zimmerman the whole story of his love. He made it very pathetic indeed, almost brought tears to the eyes of the soft-hearted young man, and persuaded him that it was a matter of life and death. Zimmerman, who was fluttering round the edge of falling in love, was terrified by this grand passion. He felt that he had no right to stand in Harold's way. His calls became less frequent. In the course of the year he fell in with a minister's daughter, who was ever so much more sympathetic in religious matters than Emily,

although not quite so pretty. They became engaged, and Vaughn was one of the ushers at the wedding. Mrs. Zimmerman never liked Vaughn. She did not know how much she owed him.

Mr. Van Deusen was a very different sort of a person from Mr. Zimmerman. He attacked Emily on her society side. His clothes were immaculate, his manners perfect, his conceit unmatchable. He hated Vaughn the minute he saw him; but Vaughn did not hate him. Harold Vaughn was too much accustomed to making use of people to hate them. It was some time before he was able to get rid of Van Deusen, though it was mostly from lack of a good opportunity. Finally the opportunity came. Harold was talking to Emily, and Van Deusen was sitting in the next room. Harold knew he was there, but Emily did not. Harold began to poke fun at him. Emily tried to stop him, but she could not help laughing. Harold continued. He ridiculed Van Deusen's white shoes and the creases in his trousers; he imitated the poor man's affected pronunciation, his excessive politeness, his utterly commonplace opinions, and brought Emily into perfect gales of laughter. Then he asked Emily definitely for her opinion of Mr. Van Deusen. Mr. Van Deusen never called again.

Mr. Butts was the most imposing looking of Miss Rogers' admirers. He was even taller than Harold, and had a fine classical profile. Harold, who went about like the arch fiend, trying to find every one's weak point, did not take long in finding Mr. Butts'. This gigantic Apollo was shy and modest. Harold, who was neither, took advantage of his rival's lowliness of mind. He walked home with Butts as he had done with Zimmerman. For a second time he told the story of his passion,—but this time in a different way.

## IN LOVE

He dwelt on his determination of winning Emily. If necessary he was going to go there every day, so that no one else could see her alone. He intimated several times that he would not have been so frank with Butts if he had not been sure that Butts did not care for Miss Rogers "in that way, you know." He rather envied Butts in being able to be satisfied with a Platonic friendship. As to those who were really rivals, they had better look out; that was all. He would not give them a minute's peace. And he was really sure that Miss Rogers would marry him some time. Butts muttered something about hoping that he would succeed, and was glad to get away from him. He never liked these violent men, any way. He called on Emily several times more, but Vaughn was always there in his most violent mood, and finally Butts gave it up. Like Zimmerman, he was not long in finding a more sympathetic girl than Emily, although in this case, too, she was not so handsome.

But by far the most formidable of Vaughn's rivals was Mr. Acton. He was, unfortunately for Harold, a man with whom you could imagine Emily falling in love. He had a stern, overbearing disposition, which changed to an agreeable strength of character when he talked to Emily. Like Van Deusen, he hated Vaughn. Vaughn rather admired him. He was of the sort that help move the world ahead,—a man made for success. However, he should not succeed here. He was always ready to give and take offence. Harold quarreled with him, taking care to have the right on his side,—an easy enough thing to do with such a man as Acton. Acton could not bear Vaughn in his sight, and yet had to see him almost every time he came to the Rogerses. He was rude to Harold before Emily; Harold, tem-

perate as he always was when he did not care to be angry. Emily begged Harold to make friends with Mr. Acton. Harold represented that it was all Mr. Acton's fault that they were not friends now. Emily began to dread Mr. Acton's calls. Acton began to dread them too. He always saw "that conceited jackass Vaughn" at the Rogerses. That conceited jackass Vaughn made a point of being at the Rogerses as much as possible. Finally a more violent outbreak of bad manners than usual on the part of Mr. Acton brought down a few very decisive words of well-merited reproof from Miss Rogers. Mr. Acton went off in a huff, and, like Mr. Van Deusen, never called again.

Harold had won the field against odds, like Napoleon, and, like Napoleon, had descended to methods of which he ought to have been ashamed; and to give him his due, he was a little ashamed. One result of his last campaign was that the Rogerses had very few callers that year.

"Emily, don't you ever intend to marry?"

"Not till I fall in love."

"Well, I don't see much of any one good enough for Your Royal Highness to fall in love with. If I did I should have it out with him."

"I think you've been acting rather the part of a scarecrow, Harold,—or of a dog in the manger."

"A scarecrow, yes. As to the dog, that remains to be seen. No one would have found fault with the dog, if he had eaten the hay himself. I am sure I am very ready to eat the hay, if it will only let itself be eaten. But it won't."

"No," said Emily, "it won't."

The next summer and the following autumn

## IN LOVE

Emily Rogers spent abroad, traveling with friends. Before she went, Vaughn had obtained leave to correspond with her. If Emily supposed that Harold was going to wait till he received an answer to his last letter before he wrote again, she was much mistaken. He wrote regularly every two days. He anticipated good results from this correspondence, and he laid himself out to write as well as he could. Emily did not answer all his letters, but she did not seem to be displeased with their frequency. Travelers are always glad to hear from home.

Harold's letters were long ones. They contained all the news he could gather about people that Emily knew, a considerable amount of speculation on philosophy and politics, as a compliment to her mental ability, and a great deal of half-disguised devotion. Vaughn was proud of his letters, and with reason. They were the kind that a girl traveling abroad likes to receive. Harold called frequently at the Rogerses, and sent Emily minute descriptions of what happened during these visits. He cultivated the acquaintance of a number of society men, and kept up with current gossip so well that he was almost always able to send Emily the news of an engagement before her friends of her own sex. He described in an entertaining way any exciting or humorous adventures that he met with. He went out to Cambridge several times, and sent her an account of how John was getting on at college, and the kind of so-called men with whom he was intimate. Of course Emily was glad to get letters from her own family; but in point of length, interest, news, and frequency, the united efforts of her family were nothing to Harold's. Emily's letters to Harold were brief descriptions of what she saw in Europe. He valued them

highly because they were from her ; if they had been from anyone else, he would probably have rated them as commonplace. She came home in December.

"Oh, I'm so glad to see you, Harold! Your letters were perfectly splendid!"

"They weren't half as nice as yours."

"Harold, I thought you always spoke the truth!"

"I don't want to be always boring you, Emily, but haven't you changed your mind?"

"No. I don't think you quite understand my character, Harold. I'm not the kind of girl to change my mind."

"Emily! Do you think I've studied your character for six years and don't know it better than you do?"

"Certainly I do."

"Then you're mistaken, Emily. Since you've been away I've learned something about your character that I never knew before, and that you don't know yourself."

What Harold had learnt about Emily was that she was his inferior in most things, especially in intellect and strength of character. She had a good mind and a strong character, but in both respects she was as nothing compared to Harold; and yet he had been making love to her for more than five years without ever asserting his superiority. He had treated her as a being nobler and wiser than himself for so long that it was no wonder that she had grown to think she really was so. At last, he did not know how, he saw her as she was. Her nature was deep but not broad. Her mind was quick, but not capable of grappling with the largest

## IN LOVE

problems. Her soul was noble, but it lacked sympathy. And, though she tried hard to be humble minded, she had at the bottom of her heart a higher opinion of herself than she deserved. She was distinctly his inferior. Yet, strangely enough, though he recognized this fact, he loved her none the less. He was used to loving her, and he could not help it. He was very angry with himself for all the foolish schemes he had tried with so little success. If he had only asserted himself like a man from the first, very likely he would have had no trouble. He looked back with an ashamed wonder at the meannesses to which he had descended to rid himself of rivals. He remembered with anger the time when he had acted the part of the cringing lover. At last he saw his true position. In future he would at least behave to Emily like a man, not like a suppliant fool or a crafty schemer. She should see that she had a very different person to deal with from the one whom she had refused six times. He would take his proper place. He would bow to her no longer. Where their opinions clashed, she should give way to his, or else recognize that she was silly for not doing so. He would bother no more with her arbitrary father, her foolish mother. They might like him or not, as they chose; in future he would act himself. In future Emily should recognize a superior,—something she had never done before. He had bowed before her too long; he would never bow again.

Emily had an awakening the next time Harold came to see her. The call was one long battle from beginning to end. Harold advanced some of his opinions. Emily contradicted them. Much to her surprise, he argued the point. She would not give in. Then Harold, who was not

a lawyer for nothing, showed her, in a perfectly polite way, that she must be a perfect fool to hold such ideas. Still she would not yield, though in her inmost soul she saw that she was beaten. It was a stormy interview, and the precursor of others still stormier; but Vaughn did not mind that. He always chose his ground well; he had a much more powerful mind than Emily, and talked far better than she; and in this argumentative stage of his love making, like Cromwell's Ironsides, he was "never beaten at all." Emily came to be afraid of him. She began to get into the habit of yielding to him,—she who never yielded to any one, not even to her father. Vaughn showed his regard for her by coming to see her pretty frequently, but he never bowed the knee to her now. He never paid her compliments, and often pointed out her failings. She did not dare to tell him his. Like a successful general, he took her dreadful batteries and turned them against herself. For five years she had contradicted him with impunity; but now Vaughn out-Heroded Herod. She had always assumed a vague superiority when talking to him; now he assumed it. She had been accustomed to chide him for coming to see her so often; now he would come every other night for two weeks and then stay away for a month at a time, and poor Emily did not open her lips to rebuke him.

Two years went by. Harold was always advancing, Emily retreating. Sometimes her old queenly spirit would come out in some flashing sarcasm; but, like the charges of the French at Sedan, these attacks only served to show the enemy's strength. She had other admirers, but they were insignificant beside Vaughn. He always gave them a fair chance now. He was per-

## IN LOVE

fectly confident that none of them could win her. Emily ruled them with a rod of iron; but what pleasure is there in being a queen, when your fairest province has asserted its independence, and is marching in full force against the capital?

It was in February, 1893, that Harold stormed the capital. The next day he was to go West on business for six months. He went out to Milton ostensibly to say good-bye. Considering what old friends he and Emily were, his good-bye was a very cold one. He scarcely alluded to his journey till he rose to go.

"Well, I'm off to Chicago and Colorado tomorrow," he said. "I shall probably be in Denver for six months, I hope rather more. Won't it be fun to get a taste of life in the West?"

"I hope you'll like it."

"We wrote to each other famously while you were in Europe," Vaughn went on. "I must have bored you like anything with those reams of paper. But I guess we'd better not write this time. I hardly think it pays for a man and a girl to write to each other when—well, when they don't mean anything, you know."

Emily's eyes glistened a little. She bit her lip.

"Perhaps we'd better not, then," she said.

"After all, you know, it would be a sort of bore for both of us," said Vaughn. "Well, good-bye, Emily."

"Good-bye," said Emily, and bit her lip again.

Harold left the room, leaving his cane in the corner. He left it there on purpose. He went down-stairs, and, when he reached the front door, turned round and went up-stairs again, and into the room where he had left Emily. She was half sitting, half lying on the sofa, crying like a child. He went up to her and put his arms round her.

"What a fool I've been, Harold!"

"I should like to hear any one else call you that!"

"To make you ask me to marry you seven times! But you haven't asked me yet this time, so I'm going to humble myself. Harold, will you marry me?"

"Emily!"

"The idea! And we might have been married seven years ago!"

Harold laughed. "Well, I'm glad we weren't," he said. "We should be elderly married folks now if we had, and now we're both of us young. By the way, Emily, I'm going to put off that Western trip for about a month."

Emily blushed. There was a pause.

"How soon are you going out West, Emily?"

"In about a month,"

## THE CHASE

Duty! Duty!! Look behind thee!  
I am spent and out of breath,  
But by Heaven I will find thee  
Were it at the gates of Death!

Happy they who heard thee calling,  
Calling from the cannon's mouth  
When the brave old boys were falling  
With their faces to the south!

Happy he who through the curtain  
Of the battle saw thy fair  
Beckoning form where death was certain,  
Laughed and ran to find thee there!

Whither art thou disappearing?  
I can laugh at danger, too,  
Reckless, hopeless, persevering:  
Only tell me what to do!

Shall I with my heart on fire  
Teach this sad world Sorrow's cure?  
Help the poor to grope up higher?  
I, the poorest of the poor!

Shall I gasp my life out, lying  
Stretched in torment on the snow,  
Grimly bearing, fiercely sighing?  
Ah for God's sake bid me go!

Hearing nothing, nothing caring,  
Off she flies, unreconciled ;  
And I follow, half despairing,  
Half in anger, like a child,

Some poor child with grief unspoken  
Left behind—Where can they be?—  
Stumbling on, in tears, heart-broken:  
“Mother!—Mother!!—Wait for me!”

A MIDDLE-AGED  
WOMAN







## A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN



Mr. Swan was reading the "Evening Transcript." His wife was finishing a "concluded" story in a magazine. Their two daughters were busy at the other end of the room. Gladys was answering an invitation, and Alison was knitting her brows over Kidd's "Social Evolution." The door bell rang, and they all looked up.

"Is Mr. Swan at home?" inquired a voice. The utterance was rapid, but distinct.

"Yes, sir."

There was a moment's pause. Then the same voice could be heard again. "No; don't take me upstairs. Is Mr. Swan in here with the family?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I would rather see them all together. Kindly give Mr. and Mrs. Swan my card."

The family curiosity was excited, and Gladys did not run away, as she usually did when general visitors appeared. The servant brought in a card, and handed it to Mr. Swan. "Clinton Hathaway" was engraved on it, without any "Mr."

"Show him right in, Flora," Mr. Swan said.

Eight staring eyes were aimed at the doorway, and covered Mr. Hathaway the moment he entered. Mr. Clinton Hathaway was tall and very thin. His hair was light, and he wore spectacles, near-sighted ones, as you could see by the way he carried his head. He shook hands with Mr. Swan, who had risen to greet him.

"I took the liberty of asking to be shown in here because my business had to do with your

A MIDDLE-family as well as yourself," the stranger said, speaking without the least embarrassment and making a comprehensive bow. "I want to get you all to sign this petition." Here he took a long roll of paper from his pocket. "It is a petition asking that the Public Library with its branches may be kept open on holidays. Will you sign it?"

He looked about eagerly. The Swan family was puzzled and a little displeased at this strange person who had broken in upon them without an introduction. Mr. Swan took the petition and read it aloud. It was concise and well expressed. He noticed that it had already been signed by at least one member of every household on Newborough Street from number one up to number seventy-six. The Swans lived at seventy-seven.

"I see you've been quite successful in our neighborhood," said Mr. Swan, looking over his eye-glasses at the young man.

"Yes. I mean to get a signature from every house on the street."

The calm self-confidence with which the stranger spoke jarred on Mr. Swan. He gave back the paper. "No, Mr. Hathaway; I cannot conscientiously sign that petition," he said, with an emphasis that indicated a final decision.

Hathaway's eyes shone. He scented a struggle, and was evidently glad to feel it coming. "Why not?" he asked; and the two words sounded like successive revolver shots.

"Because the library employes need holidays as much as the rest of us," Mr. Swan replied, taking off his glasses and looking the stranger in the eye.

Hathaway made a deprecating gesture with his hand. "The library employes!" he said scornfully. "What do the handful of library employes amount to when compared with the whole pop-

## AGED WOMAN

ulation of the city of Boston? Nothing, sir! Take away a privilege from half a million persons in order to give one to a couple of dozen! You might as well close all the churches on Sunday, on the ground that the ministers have worked hard all the week and need a rest as much as other people. But you'll say Sundays are just the days when the churches ought to be open. Exactly; and holidays are the days of all days when the libraries ought to be open."

As Mr. Swan could think of no other answer, he coughed. Such a manoeuvre, however, could hardly be considered a permanent reply. There was a moment of silence. Hathaway eyed his audience with the same expression which Horatius may be presumed to have worn when he defended the bridge. "There's for one Etruscan! Would any one else like to try his hand?"

Alison took up a pen, crossed the room, signed the petition, and went back to her seat.

Hathaway did not thank her. He merely held up the paper so that his near-sighted eyes could read the new signature, folded up the document, put it in his pocket, bade the Swans good night, and withdrew.

Gladys Swan was considered by her admirers as "rather a remarkable girl." When those who held this opinion were asked what there was remarkable about her, their answers were unsatisfactory. Her older sister Alison maintained that the only remarkable thing about Gladys was her remarkable laziness. From the time when she was twelve till the time when she was twenty-four, Alison had tried hard to make her read; and in these twelve years Gladys had read seventeen books. Of these she selected "Sartor Resartus" as her favorite. "It's like some people,"

## A MIDDLE-

she would say. "I didn't care much for it when I read it, but since then it grows on me." However this may have been, she never gave herself the treat of reading it a second time. One advantage at least she derived from her laziness; her constant antipathy to unnecessary exertion had made her every movement graceful. She was at her best in a ball room, where her perfect taste in clothes, her pretty face, her elegant carriage, and her vague reputation for remarkableness attracted perhaps five times as many young men as would have been allotted to her at a socialistic dancing party. One of these gentlemen, a certain Mr. E. Bacon Bacon, had the good fortune to affect her like "Sartor Resartus." She did not care for him much at first, but afterward he grew upon her. At the time of Clinton Hathaway's unexpected visit, Mr. Bacon and Miss Gladys Swan were engaged.

A few days after the episode of the library petition, Mr. Bacon was waiting on the Swans' front doorstep for the servant to answer the bell, when he was startled by a long-legged apparition which came bounding up the steps two stairs at a time.

"Mr. Bacon, isn't it?" the new-comer inquired cheerfully. "You and I are bound for the same port."

Bacon looked at him coldly and said nothing.

The stranger laughed. "Well done!" he said. "You're a regular Bostonian, aren't you?—stony British stare and all!" Then turning to the servant, who opened the door at this juncture: "Tell Miss Alison Swan that Clinton Hathaway wants to see her."

Both young men were shown into the drawing room. Hathaway instantly buried himself in an arm-chair and began to read a book of

## AGED WOMAN

poetry. Bacon stood in the middle of the room, alternately looking at the pictures and scowling at Hathaway.

In a few minutes Alison came in. "How do you do, Mr. Hathaway?" she said, advancing cordially and shaking hands. "Have you met Mr. Bacon?"

Hathaway looked over his shoulder at Bacon and smiled. "Well, I don't exactly know how to answer your question," he said. "I've met him, but he hasn't met me."

Bacon scowled again, said he was very glad to meet Mr. Hathaway, asked after Gladys, who was down with the measles, and took his departure.

"That man's a fool," Hathaway observed, "and I'm glad he's gone. What I came for was this, Miss Swan. I've been reading your article on Woman Suffrage in the 'Rostrum.' I like the spirit of it, but I want to point out a lot of mistakes. What on earth did you talk about George Eliot and Rosa Bonheur and Mrs. Julia Ward Howe for? That kind of thing is played out. You'd have done much better to talk about your own mother or mine. You've got ten times as much right to vote as that silly little E. Bacon Bacon who was just here; that's a point for woman suffrage. But Rosa Bonheur has nothing to do with the matter."

An ordinary young woman would have been upset by such a speech from a perfect stranger. Alison was delighted with its frankness. She thought a moment.

"Yes, I think you're right," she said slowly. "I was carried away by my desire to bring up examples of really great women. What else did you notice, Mr. Hathaway? You must know that I'm a very intimate friend of yours. Your 'Ideal World' is one of my bibles."

An hour later, when Mary came into announce dinner, they were still talking. Alison asked Hathaway to stay to dinner, and he did so, much to the chagrin of Mr. Swan, who preferred to drink his claret without lectures on total abstinence.

After that Hathaway called on Alison very often. She was carried away with him, and could think of no greater pleasure than to have him find fault with her. Gladys could not bear him. Her knowledge on all sorts of topics was of the delightfully indefinite variety, the kind that has to be taken for granted. Hathaway took nothing for granted; and once he made fun of her ignorance so openly that Mr. Bacon, according to a subsequent declaration, "almost felt like doing something." Mr. Swan, after having been badly routed in two or three arguments with Hathaway, changed his tactics, and always read his newspaper when the young man was about.

"I know him," he said to his wife. "I've seen that sort of man before. If he'd lived before the war, he'd have been an abolitionist. Now he can't be that, so he makes up by being a woman-suffragist, socialist, land-taxite, Christian scientist, and probably a vegetarian and free-thinker."

In spite of this condemnation, Mrs. Swan could not help feeling a sense of fascination when the young man was about. She had a vague feeling that she would obey him if he told her to do anything. She was the only one of the family connection who was not disgusted when Alison announced that Mr. Clinton Hathaway and she were engaged.

Mr. Swan had always preferred Gladys to Alison. Gladys was healthy in her tastes, he would say. When she asked him for money, it was always for a bonnet, a dress, a theatre party,

## AGED WOMAN

or something sensible; Alison wanted it for the Associated Charities or to help "causes." He could give Gladys satisfactory little talks about being extravagant, and thus preserve the dignity of a father; Alison was so hopelessly virtuous and self-restrained that there was no bearing her. Extreme virtue in an individual is a tacit reproach to that individual's family;—at least, so Mr. Swan considered it. When Alison told him of her engagement, he forgot himself so far as to say that Hathaway was "not exactly a perfect gentleman, my dear."

Alison was exasperating enough not to lose her temper. "I know he isn't," she said quietly. "Clinton made up his mind some time ago that he'd rather be a man than a gentleman."

Mr. Swan looked at her for a moment to see if she was really his daughter, and then left the room. He was afraid, as he afterward acknowledged to his wife, that she was going on to say that her fiancé had decided to become a Musliman. "Why couldn't she have chosen a sensible man, as her sister did?" the unhappy father exclaimed, pacing up and down the room angrily. "Bacon's conceited and a snob; but give him a cigar and an arm-chair, and at least he can keep his mouth shut. This Hathaway man won't even smoke!"

Mrs. Swan, although she listened sympathetically to this tirade, sympathized with Alison, too. In fact she infinitely preferred Hathaway to her other future son-in-law, whose single accomplishment of smoking was not, in her opinion, of sufficient importance to make up for his numerous shortcomings. She told Alison that she heartily approved the engagement, and that she hoped Mr. Hathaway would be her friend as well as her son-in-law. Alison, who was

not accustomed to receiving sympathy, broke down under this unexpected kindness; and for once the two had a good cry together. Alison confided to her mother some of Clinton's schemes for reforming Boston; and Mrs. Swan was so much enchanted with them that she described them to her husband with many unconscious modifications. Mr. Swan, who was trying to go to sleep at the time, replied with a mingled growl and interjection, to which he often had recourse when displeased. His wife, however hard she might listen, could never quite make out whether it was merely a grunt, or was intended for a deliberate imprecation.

Mrs. Swan was a stout, middle-aged woman; and she looked so like other stout, middle-aged women that you felt, when you first met her, that there would not be the smallest chance of your recognizing her when you met her again. She was a woman after her husband's own heart, for there was nothing peculiar—some said nothing interesting—about her. Her occupations, so far as she had any, had always been strictly feminine, and such as her conservative husband approved. She had taught a Sunday-school class for the first three years of her married life, and had given it up only when the cares incident to the bringing up of her children had proved too much for work of any other kind. Since her daughters had graduated from her supervision, she had looked about for some suitable occupation to take the place of her exertions in educating them. She had joined a magazine club, which subscribed to all the magazines and sent them about from member to member. She was now thinking of belonging to a reading club also; but it is a serious thing for a busy woman to give up one afternoon a week to reading, and she hesitated.

## AGED WOMAN

For busy she certainly was, though she had nothing to do. "What with my housekeeping and shopping in the morning, and my social duties in the afternoon, my day's pretty well taken up without anything else," she once said to her husband. "And very well taken up, too," was Mr. Swan's reply.

Mrs. Swan never had shared her husband's feelings toward Alison; on the other hand, with a mother's instinct, she had early perceived that Alison was going to be queer and unpopular, and had tried to make up for it by being especially considerate and affectionate to her older daughter. Alison repelled advances, but Mrs. Swan managed to do a great deal for her. It was owing to her influence that Mr. Swan was finally induced to let Alison go to Smith College, whence, according to him, she returned "with a pair of glasses on her nose, and crazy as a March hare." Mrs. Swan was very much afraid of Alison, and treated her with a great deal of respect, except in one particular. In the matter of clothes Alison was a child in her hands. Mrs. Swan selected everything that her intellectual daughter wore, and even compelled Alison to stand for hours while Madame Kellie tried on waists, sacques, and overskirts; or to wait in torture at a store while her mother matched a piece of mauve ribbon. The result was that Alison, instead of looking like a woman who tried to dress badly, looked like a woman who tried to dress well.

Partly as a sort of payment for these services, and partly because she had no one else to confide in, Alison often made her mother a depositary of her charitable schemes and her aspirations for self-improvement. Her mother listened as sympathetically as she listened to her hus-

band when he condemned the higher education of women. When Alison became engaged, these confidential interviews with her mother ceased; but instead Mrs. Swan was allowed to be present when Alison and Clinton discussed the reformation of the world and how it should be brought about. For Clinton and Alison were not one of the engaged couples who insist upon being alone. You did not have to scuff your feet or sing a song when you were approaching the room where they were talking, in order that they might have time to withdraw to a respectable distance from each other. Clinton was seldom demonstrative, and, when he was, the presence of a third person had no effect whatever upon him. If he chanced to be sitting with his arm round Alison when the Queen of England came in, he would not have withdrawn it, unless, it might be, to add the force of gesticulation to his denunciation of hereditary monarchy. But, as a matter of fact, very few demonstrations of affection passed between the lovers. They loved each other with their heads, as it were. Clinton was in love with Alison's mind, and gave just about as much thought to her physical attractions as he did to his own clothes.

Mrs. Swan liked to be present at their discussions. She listened in an entirely impersonal way, nodding approval occasionally when Clinton laid down the law. It never entered her head that she herself could ever have anything to do with such matters; but when she was with the two anarchists, as Mr. Swan called them, she heartily agreed with all their plans. If what they said was true, it was the duty of every grown person in the state to join in and work with them; and this doctrine, which they were continually laying down, Mrs. Swan came to accept as a common-

## AGED WOMAN

place. The idea that SHE should help them did not occur to her,—nor, for a long time, to them.

But it happened one day that Clinton, who was drawing a vivid picture of the contemptible sort of woman that centuries of female slavery had brought about, suddenly fixed his eyes on Mrs. Swan, and realized that she was exactly the kind of person that he was talking about. Most men would have been embarrassed at such a discovery; Clinton was delighted. No thought of politeness to a hostess, chivalry to a woman, respect for an elder, or deference to Alison's mother stopped him for a moment. Not because he pitied her did he pause before attacking her, but only because he was intoxicated by the easily seized joy that lay within his grasp. He waited as a lion might crouch a moment longer than necessary before leaping on some particularly toothsome prey. He eyed Mrs. Swan, who was placidly knitting, as if she had been a serpent. She had suddenly become to him not a woman, but the representative of a class—a futile, feeble-minded, idle class that cumbered the world. Alison was weak enough to pity her unconscious mother; but there was that in Clinton's eye which forbade her to interfere. There was a pause for a moment while Mrs. Swan knitted on, as unconscious as Pompeii the day before its burial. When she finished her row, she looked up to see why no one spoke. Then it was that Hathaway at last broke the silence.

"The middle-aged married woman is the failure of modern civilization!" he exclaimed, rising and pacing up and down the room. "She is an anomaly,—a thing for which no use can be found. She alone of all the men and women in the world is utterly, deplorably, and persistently idle! The boy studies; the girl studies; the man works;

single women work; young married women work; but SHE—at most she makes a call on some one even idler than herself!” Clinton brought out these last words with a savage sneer which made poor Mrs. Swan take out her handkerchief. “And is she ashamed of herself?” he continued, without stopping to notice his adversary’s demoralization. “Does she cringe about, conscious of the fact that she alone of God’s creatures has never earned the right to walk the earth? I ask you, DOES she?” he repeated, stamping his foot on the ground.

The only answer Mrs. Swan gave to this question was a little sob. Alison could not help reaching out and taking her hand. Clinton did not heed them. “Cringe? not a bit of it!” he went on, walking the room again. “She swells up and down the street”—here he endeavored without much success to imitate the lady whom he was describing—“as if she would say: ‘Look at me! Just think of the children I’ve brought into the world!’ As if the world wasn’t over-populated already! How does such a woman occupy herself? Perhaps half an hour is given to house-keeping, or more probably she assigns that duty to her children. The rest of the day she eats, drinks, sleeps, and talks. So long as she had children to spoil and make as bad as herself, she at least had that excuse for existence; but when they are grown up, she merely looks at her husband working, while she grows fat! Why doesn’t she work? ‘I haven’t got time,’ she says. Time! Why, that’s all she has got! What does she do in the course of the day? All the morning she goes shopping—she might accomplish the same business with three postal cards in five minutes; in the afternoon she pays visits; in the evening she reads a magazine.” Here he sud-

## AGED WOMAN

denly stopped in front of his victim. "I appeal to you, Mrs. Swan," he said. "Is not that the way you spend your time?"

Mrs. Swan nodded desperately, holding her handkerchief to her eyes. He had described her day exactly.

"I thank you," Clinton said, suddenly becoming more dignified. "I thank you for admitting the deplorable truth." Then, growing warm again: "I tell you, if the socialists had their way—and some day they will—such creatures would be swept off the face of the earth!"

He stopped. Mrs. Swan dried her eyes and gradually became calmer. At last she was able to trust her voice.

"What ought I to do?" she asked timidly.

Clinton's face became transfigured. His voice shook with emotion. "What!" he cried joyfully. "Have I converted you? Are you willing to do your part? Oh, I can't tell you how happy I am! Work! That is all. Work at anything, no matter what. Don't stand idle all the day. Teach, learn, type-write, write shorthand, lecture, preach, anything and everything. Oh, Alison, I was never so happy in my life!"

When Clinton had gone, Mrs. Swan discussed with Alison what she had better do. She felt rather like a man who has "got religion" and doesn't quite know what to do with it.

"Lecturing and preaching are splendid things, of course," she said, "but I'm afraid I should never get quite accustomed to standing alone on a platform. I think perhaps I might learn to do typewriting."

Alison hesitated. She knew her mother better than Hathaway did, and could not imagine her doing work of any kind. However, she did not want to spoil Clinton's conversion.

"Yes, that would be splendid," she said, trying to be enthusiastic. "Papa'll buy you a typewriter, I'm sure."

The mention of her husband made Mrs. Swan feel uncomfortable. She was in the position of a boy of fifteen who has decided to go to the war, but has not yet gone through the formality of telling his father. When she left her daughter, her enthusiasm had diminished perceptibly. That evening, as her husband sat just across the table reading his "Transcript," she eyed him over her magazine, waiting with a beating heart for the right moment to accost him. At last he put down the paper and yawned. Her time had come.

"John, I don't think I've had quite enough to do lately," she said, beginning, as a woman is apt to do, at some distance from the subject she intended ultimately to arrive at.

Mr. Swan looked up surprised. "Why, Carrie," he said, "you told me only yesterday that you had to make three calls every day to keep your list from mounting up. It seems to me you've been busier than usual." He smiled, but she did not smile back.

"I've been thinking that I ought—I mean that I want to do something—to have some regular occupation. Would you object if I took up—well, say typewriting?"

Mr. Swan stared. "What on earth's got into you, Carrie?" he asked in astonishment.

"Oh, nothing, dear, nothing," Mrs. Swan said, looking round the room nervously. "Of course if you object—"

"Object? Why, Carrie, what an idea! You shall have a typewriter to-morrow if you really want it; but what put such a notion into your head?"

Mrs. Swan blushed and began to read her

## AGED WOMAN

magazine. Her husband laughed, took up his paper, and started on a new column, glancing across the table from time to time. She felt his eyes, and colored, partly from embarrassment and partly from pleasure at having gained her point. John was such a good husband!

The next day the typewriter arrived. Mrs. Swan, though she was delighted with her husband's present, could make nothing of it alone, and was obliged to send to the place it came from for a man to come and teach her. That man had a hard time of it. It was not that Mrs. Swan was stupid; she was commonplace, not deficient in her abilities. But she was not accustomed to learning anything, and she always had had a horror of having the principle of any machine explained to her. Her instructor had the good sense to see that his three successive careful elucidations of the principle of the typewriter made no impression, and he finally contented himself with showing her how, if she pressed such and such a place, such and such a thing would happen. This suited her better. It was the way she had learned the sewing machine thirty years before.

"And if anything goes wrong, or I forget anything, I can send for you," she said, as the man stood mopping his brow before taking his departure.

"I guess you'd better send for my son Rudolph," the man said, without giving his reasons for this suggestion. Rudolph was sent for the next day.

The habit of idleness is very much like other habits which get the upper hand of people, like smoking, drinking, or opium eating, for instance; but it has one important difference. The reformed drunkard or opium eater is safe so long

## A MIDDLE-

as he sits still and does nothing; the reformed idler must be continually exerting himself in order to escape his favorite vice. But it is not good fun to exert yourself. The moderator at a public meeting soon learns that if he wants a motion to be lost, he had better say that those in favor of it shall stand up, and those opposed shall remain sitting down. The average man has a marked tendency toward repose. The average middle-aged woman has even more; and Mrs. Swan was an average middle-aged woman.

Alison was amazed, however, to see how hard her mother worked. Mrs. Swan gave up three hours a day to her typewriter; and at the end of a month she could write twenty-five words a minute. Forty was what she was aiming at. Clinton had promised her all his lectures to copy for him as soon as she reached that point; and she meant to get some work from her husband, too. During the second month she worked on, but there was a difference in the way she worked. The machine had lost its fascination; and she no longer plied it eagerly as at first, but like a slave. One day, when Clinton and Alison were safe in Fall River, she stole away after an hour's work and finished the afternoon at the Dexters' afternoon tea.

At last there came a day when Mrs. Swan timed herself and found she had written forty-five words in a minute. She tried again: forty-seven. Once more: this time, in spite of several long words, it was forty-four. She sat back in her chair and looked gloomily out of the window. It was raining, and the darkness of the afternoon and the noise of the water running down the water spouts acted unpleasantly on her feelings. This ought to have been a moment of triumph,—and here she was feeling anything but tri-

## AGED WOMAN

umphant. Why is it that we look back on success as a matter of course? We never should achieve it if we felt that way beforehand. Mrs. Swan thought with horror of the long hours of work which the future had in store for her. "And what good does it do?" she said aloud. Her back felt tired; her eyes were heavy. She rose and stood at the window listlessly, watching the waterproofed women shuffling along the glistening sidewalks. She could hear Alison's step coming along the hallway and into the room.

"I can write forty words a minute now, Alison," she said, without looking round.

"You don't mean it!" Alison exclaimed. "How splendid! Well, Clinton's got his essay on 'Improvement and Perfection' all ready for you. Oh, mamma, isn't it fine to work?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Swan absently,—and then wondered what had made her tell such a deliberate lie.

When Mr. Swan went upstairs to bed that night, he found his wife crying. She was trying to brush her hair, but every now and then the tears came so fast that she was obliged to put down her brush and give them her undivided attention. Mr. Swan felt that a crisis was at hand. He was not a man of quick perceptions; but he had had thirty years in which to perceive what sort of a woman his wife was, and, as her nature was far from complex, that time had sufficed to give him a good working acquaintance with her character. He had felt for weeks that something was on her mind; but he had thought it best not to question her. Now that her tears gave him a reason for speaking, he determined to probe the matter to the bottom. He drew up a chair and sat down beside her.

"What's the matter, dear?" he asked, taking

her hand; and the irresolute way in which she replied "Nothing especial" convinced him that she really wanted him to persevere and find out what was the trouble. "It's something to do with the typewriter, isn't it?" he continued, studying her face with the hope of reading there whatever information she might try to withhold from him. Her lips moved, but she said nothing. He knew that he had guessed right. She would have contradicted him if he had been wrong. "Can't you master it, Carrie?" he inquired, putting his arm round her for the first time in a good many years. "Is it too hard for you?"

"Oh, it isn't that, it isn't that!" she faltered, dropping her head on his shoulder and bursting out crying afresh. "It's the work I've got to do, and the feeling that I can never stop, no matter how tired I am!"

"But why can't you stop, my dear child? Why in the world should you do any work, anyway? We've got enough money to live on, thank God! It isn't your place to work."

"Oh, yes, it is," his wife interposed hurriedly. "Clinton said"—She stopped. She had never told her husband of her conversion to the gospel of work, knowing that he would disapprove. She stopped,—but she stopped too late.

"Clinton! Dbgh!" This is the nearest I can come to expressing Mr. Swan's imprecatory grunt. He rose and walked up and down the room in anger. "Well," he said, stopping at last in front of his wife and jamming his hands into his pockets, "so it was Clinton who made you get that bicyc—typewriter?"

Mrs. Swan was silent. Her husband went on as if she had answered. "It's Clinton who's made you tire yourself out like a galley slave! I've noticed that you haven't been yourself for

## AGED WOMAN

the last three months." Again there was no answer.

"I suppose he wants you to kill yourself writing out his lectures on vegetarianism!" Mr. Swan continued savagely.

"Oh, no—at least—I'll tell you all about it," Mrs. Swan said, recovering herself with an effort and drying her eyes. She told her husband everything: how Clinton had converted her, how she had worked, and how she had grown tired of it. "I felt a little blue this evening," she concluded. "I shall be all ready for work to-morrow."

"I don't exactly see how you can work to-morrow, my dear," her husband said, smiling grimly, "for the typewriter's going back to the store to-morrow morning."

Having delivered himself of this speech, Mr. Swan took off his clothes with some unnecessary ferocity, and went to bed, where he soothed himself to sleep by a series of dubious interjections.

The next afternoon, when Mr. Swan came home from his business, he found Clinton and Alison sitting in the drawing-room. Clinton had a package of manuscript in his hand.

Mr. Swan assumed an air of affability. "Ah, what's that you've got there, Clinton?" he inquired. "One of your lectures against capitalists?"

"It's his lecture on 'Improvement and Perfection,'" Alison interposed; but her tact accomplished nothing, for Clinton blurted out: "Something I brought for your wife to typewrite."

Mr. Swan laughed a little nervously. "Oh, that's too bad," he said with assumed sympathy, "for the typewriter was sent back to the store this very morning."

Hathaway was deceived by the sympathetic tone of voice. "Was there anything the matter with it?" he asked innocently.

Then at last a great thunder-cloud swept over Mr. Swan's face, and the storm burst.

"No, sir!" he said, increasing his anger by talking very loud. "No, sir, there was nothing the matter with it. But there's something the matter with Mrs. Swan, thanks to your kindness in telling her it was her duty to kill herself! What do you mean, sir, by persuading a woman of her age that it's her duty to break her back over one of your confounded lectures about how every one ought to be a Jerusalem wildcat? It isn't your fault that she isn't as crazy as you and Alison! If you'll leave my wife alone for the future, I'll be very much obliged to you!"

Clinton's anger at this attack was eclipsed by his joy at being in a fight. He sprang to his feet, to the terror of Alison, who was really afraid he was going to assault and batter her father. But he only walked rapidly about the room, and then stopped abruptly, looking Mr. Swan sternly in the eye.

"Thank you," he said; "thank you, Mr. Swan. Your remarks show how far human idiocy can go. Shorn of your comments on Alison's and my insanity, they consist of a demand for the reasons which impelled me to persuade your wife to commit suicide, and an intimation that you do not wish me to communicate with her in future. As to the first"—

Here he stopped, for Mr. Swan, seeing that he was in for a long argumentative discussion with Hathaway, a thing which he detested, turned away with an abrupt exclamation, and left the room. Like many another man he would rather be beaten than bored. Clinton had won many

## AGED WOMAN

victories by talking well, and more by talking a great deal.

The next morning, a little after ten o'clock, Mrs. Swan was in the library chatting with Mr. Bacon Bacon. She liked to talk to him, for he was the only one of the family circle whom she felt to be her intellectual inferior. She had been in high spirits ever since her husband had vetoed her type-writing resolutions. She had the satisfaction of knowing in the first place that she had chosen the straight and narrow path, and in the second that she would never have to walk upon it. Her conscience was clear—at least—yes, her conscience was clear. The outer door opened; she heard a step on the stair—and suddenly her conscience was not clear at all.

Clinton strode into the room without noticing Bacon, and stood directly in front of Mrs. Swan, without speaking. She took out her handkerchief.

"Am I to understand that you've given up the idea of working?" Clinton said at last.

"Mr. Swan made me," Mrs. Swan answered, keeping back the tears with an effort. "It wasn't my fault."

"But do you want to work?" Hathaway continued, glaring at her through his terrible spectacles. "Weren't you glad when he sent that typewriter home?"

"Yes, I was," Mrs. Swan replied, rousing up all her courage, and sitting up straight. "And I'm not going to work a bit more. It isn't my place, anyway. My place is to stay at home and make my husband and children comfortable."

Clinton smiled coldly. "And three months from now," he said, "when your daughters are married, what will it be your place to do all day long while your husband is at the office? To read a

A MIDDLE-

magazine?"—he paused—"or match a ribbon, or go to a lunch party?"

Mrs. Swan said nothing. Those were exactly the things she meant to do. Bacon, who had been gradually bristling up at Clinton's insolent way of speaking, shouldered his way into the conversation at this point.

"Well, why shouldn't she?" he said, turning fiercely upon Hathaway. "Those are all very suitable things to do. It isn't a woman's place to work."

"Nor yours to talk," said Clinton, without looking round. "Now, Mrs. Swan, just one word before we leave this business,—for I don't propose to attack you again on the subject. There are two sorts of people in this world: those who do something, and those who don't. You have elected to belong to the latter kind. You're just an idle drone who crawls about and does nothing—very much like this little Bacon man here. If you were to die it wouldn't make any difference. Your husband would mourn you for a year, and at the end of that time he'd get another wife, maybe worse than you, maybe better. You don't amount to anything. If you'd never been born, everything would be just as it is now. I see now that I was wrong in trying to make anything out of you. I hoped that you were idle only because you did not know it was your duty to work. Now I perceive that the disease of doing nothing is so deeply ingrained in your system that it is impossible to kill it without killing you."

Mrs. Swan shuddered. She was too much frightened to cry. Clinton walked to the door, but turned before taking his departure.

"Good-bye, Mrs. Swan," he said quietly, "and remember your position. You and those like you

## AGED WOMAN

are the camp-followers of the army of the world. Under the pretext of making the soldiers comfortable, you delay their progress, interfere with all their movements, and do your best to achieve their destruction."

Having finished what he had to say, Clinton went out of the room and down-stairs. Mrs. Swan had retained sufficient consciousness to experience a distinct sense of relief when she heard the house door shut behind him.

"That man is no gentleman!" Mr. Bacon exclaimed, springing to his feet and pacing the floor as he had seen Hathaway do. "I almost thought of interrupting him or doing something. Don't mind what he said," he added, sitting down beside Mrs. Swan. "I approve of you, and I should be sorry if you died,—at least, you know what I mean. And as to working, I don't see why you should work. I don't work, and I don't think it's necessary."

Mrs. Swan glanced up at her sympathizer, and then let her eyes fall. "There are two sorts of people in the world," Clinton had said, and he was right. There was the Clinton Hathaway sort and the E. Bacon Bacon sort. For better or worse, she had thrown in her lot with the Bacon sort. She rose with an effort and looked at him again. He was not so intellectual looking as Clinton, but he was decidedly better dressed.

"Have you anything especial to do just now?" she inquired, with an almost imperceptible note of sarcasm in her voice.

"No, nothing at all. I never have in the morning."

"Well, won't you take me round to see Virginia Pratt's wedding presents? Gladys says they're splendid."

## THE STARS

I lay at my ease in my little boat,  
Fast moored to the shore of the pond,  
And looked up through the trees that swayed  
in the breeze  
At God's own sky beyond.

And I thought of the want and the sin in the  
world,  
And the pain and the grief they bring,  
And I marveled at God for spreading abroad  
Such sorrow and suffering.

Evening came creeping over the earth,  
And the sky grew dim and gray  
And faded from sight; and I grumbled at Night  
For stealing my sky away.

Then out of the dark just the speck of a face  
Peeped forth from its window bars;  
And I laughed to see it smile at me:  
I had not thought of the stars!

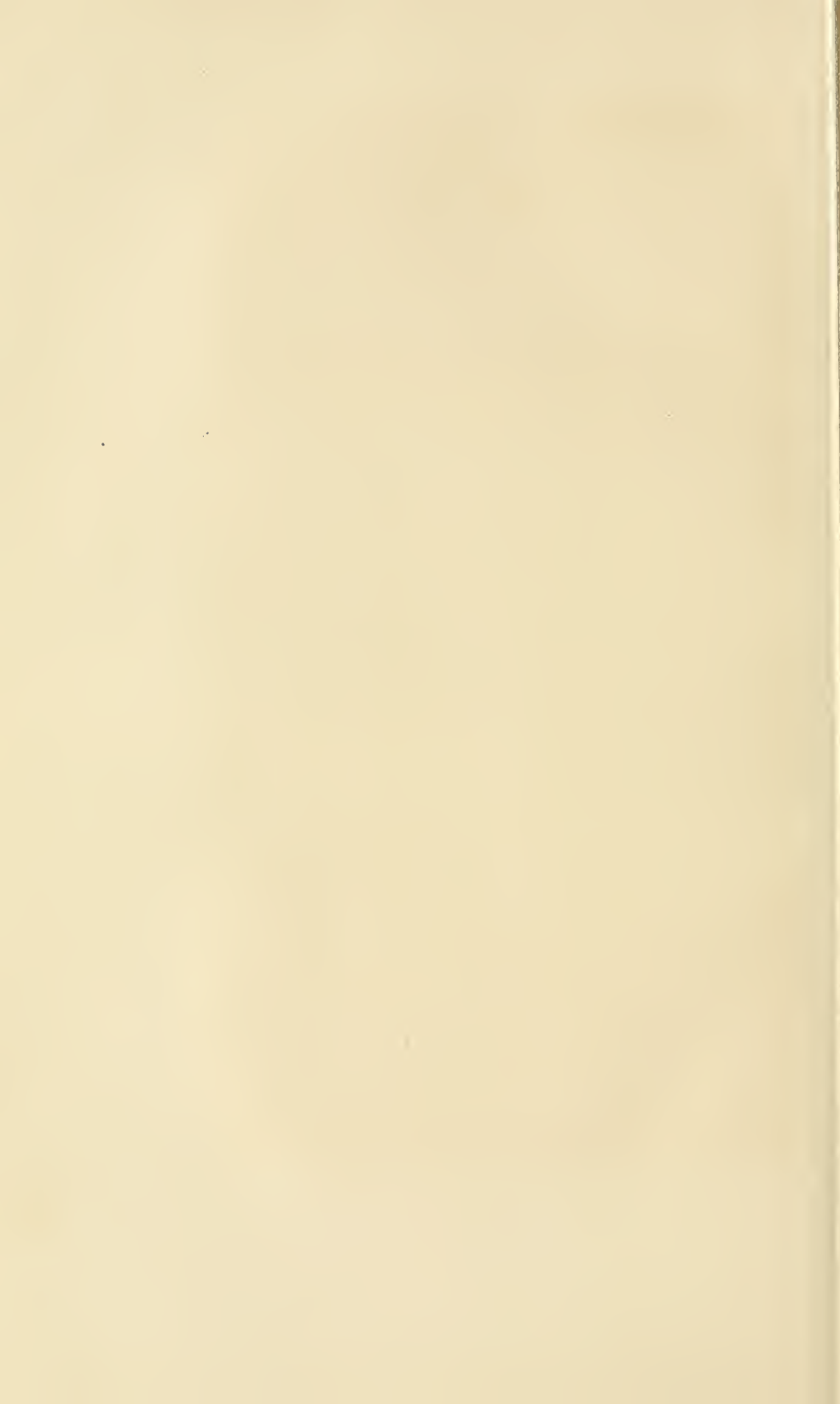
There are millions of loving thoughts and deeds  
All ripe for awakening,  
That never would start from the world's cold  
heart  
But for sorrow and suffering.

Yes, the blackening night is sombre and cold,  
And the day was warm and fine;  
And yet if the day never faded away  
The stars would never shine!

LAETITIA







# UNTAUGHT BY EXPERIENCE



When John Markoe went on board the "Fulda" at Genoa, he was surprised to find a letter waiting for him. It was from an intimate friend, a classmate at the University of Halle, who wrote as follows:—

MÜNCHEN, September 30, 1890.

Dear John:

This is not a letter, but a warning. Why do you try for perhaps a year or more with your large family to live? You will not be in peace. I am older than you (laugh not, John; a man can see and learn many things in two years), and perhaps I have had experiments which you have not known. You have two brothers, two sisters, a father and a mother, and they are all of them grown up. You cannot with them all in peace live, John; try it not. If you are hard and stern and severe with them—I cannot well imagine it—then will they serve you and bow before you; but you will see that they are all afraid of you, and that will render you always uncomfortable. But if—and it is much more likely—you kneel to them and lick their hands and cast dust upon your head, then will they trample upon you and grind you to powder. I have the bad luck not to know personally your family. No matter. It is impossible for seven grown men and women to live together in happiness; especially if two, your good father and mother, try to exercise control over the others. I cannot in a letter and in this villanous speech of yours well argue; but ah, could I only now be talking with you face to face and in the speech of the Fatherland! In this matter, dear John, obey your Heinrich. Live where you like in any of those great North America cities: New York, Boston, Chicago, but not in Philadelphia!

If you decide to disobey me and to live at home (but I will not believe it possible), at least do your work out of the house, and come not back till evening time. But better far would it be to live in another city. Then would you preserve uninjured those feelings of veneration and affection for your parents, your brothers and your sisters, which would, I know well, undergo some stormy shocks if you insist to live with them in the same house.

Be not offended, dear John, that I speak out of the heart. But believe me in this, as in all,

Your true friend,

HEINRICH KNOBELSDORF.

John found this letter so characteristic of his friend that he laughed aloud several times while

## UNTAUGHT BY

he was reading it. In the course of the next few days he thought about it more seriously, and wondered how much truth there was in it. Knobelsdorf had a way of hitting the nail on the head, and seldom talked at random; but certainly his views on the difficulties of family life were exaggerated. As to John's living anywhere but in Philadelphia, it was out of the question. Such a course would be apt to irritate the family far more than the necessary friction of every-day life could do. Knobelsdorf seemed to think they were all going to fight like cats and dogs. Why should they? When six sensible men and women have rubbed along comfortably for years, are they going to be set by the ears merely by the advent of an inoffensive young Greek professor? How could Knobelsdorf judge of persons whom he had never seen and barely heard of? Because one family could not live together happily was no reason why another should not. Because the Knobelsdorfs were always at loggerheads was no reason why the Markoes should take to fighting. Yet in an intimate friendship of five years John had never known Heinrich to take a definite stand on any important matter without having a great deal of reason on his side. It was clearly impossible for John to go to live in Boston or New York; but, on the other hand, it was perfectly easy to take warning when there was a cry of "Breakers ahead!" His final determination was to live with his family in Philadelphia as he had always intended, but to take advantage of his German friend's advice. He would never get into a quarrel with any member of his family if he could possibly help it; and if he did get into one, he would get out of it as fast as he could.

John Peterson Markoe was twenty-five years

## EXPERIENCE

old. He had been studying Greek for five years in Germany, and had worked even harder than his German classmates at Halle. He was short and stout. Hard study had as yet worn no lines in his face. Had it not been for his large round spectacles, his appearance would have been boyish, for he was clean shaven. His hair was dark and much too long to be fashionable. His clothes were ill-chosen and carelessly put on. His boots always seemed as if they had been blacked a few days before. During the twelve days that he was on board the "Fulda," he spent most of his time in reading, and paid very little attention to what the other passengers were doing; but whenever he looked up from his book and glanced about him, his indefatigable little black eyes could evidently see a great deal in a very short time. His fellow passengers were irritated at his studiousness, and arranged several excellent practical jokes to play upon him; but all their plans were foiled by those wonderful little eyes. Markoe was old for his age, though he looked young. He was endowed with that strange power of exquisitely delicate sympathy, more wonderful than the gifts of fairies in the story books, which enables its possessor to understand the thoughts and motives of others merely by their faces and by what they say. He was quick-tempered, and controlled his temper only fairly well. In his manners and customs he had changed considerably in the five years that had passed since he had been with his family. The foundation of a man's character is apt to stay the same from his first childhood to his second.

John found it very pleasant to be at home again. He surprised the family at lunch, and there was a great deal of clatter and welcoming

## UNTAUGHT BY

and laughing and crying when he appeared at the door. Every one was delighted to see him. His older brother Ericsson could not help sneering at his spectacles, and saying that in his opinion the glass in them was common window glass; but apart from this nothing disagreeable was said. Mr. Markoe was anxious to hear about the young German emperor, and was much pleased when John said, "He looks something like you, father." Mrs. Markoe was delighted to find out for certain that John had not had an illness since he left home. "Your letters never spoke of your health, and I thought you might be concealing something," she said. Laetitia, the youngest of the Markoes, asked John how he liked the Alhambra, and was sadly disconcerted when, amidst the general laughter, she was informed that the Alhambra was not in Germany. Walter, John's younger brother, was all agog at the traveler's bloody accounts of student duelling, and made John promise to give him a lesson in the use of the short sword that very day. As to Mary Markoe, the oldest of the young people, she called the attention of the company to the fact that she had prophesied at breakfast that John would come within twenty-four hours. Luncheon was prolonged far into the afternoon in John's honor. Every face beamed with pleasure at seeing him. He felt that his welcome was warmer than he deserved, and he wished Knobelsdorf could be there to see.

When John first read Knobelsdorf's letter, the idea of the Markoes living together on unpleasant terms seemed to him absurd. Before he left home for Germany five years ago, they had rubbed along pleasantly enough. But at that time Ericsson was off on a two years' expedition round the world, and Walter and Laetitia were

## EXPERIENCE

children. When John came back, everything was different. The Markoes were all of them sensitive, and all of them quick-tempered; but none of them except Mrs. Markoe and John realized that the others were so. Mr. Markoe, precise as an instructor at West Point, was continually irritated by the inconsequent behavior and unpunctual habits of the rest of the family; and they were as much annoyed by his punctilio as he could possibly be by their lack of formality. Mrs. Markoe kept her temper wonderfully; but she was often a blazing fire within. She did her share in keeping up the general irritation by telling long and unprofitable stories in which no one was interested. As far as John could find out, Ericsson regarded the rest of the family as a set of fools. He certainly treated them as such. Walter was his mother's spoiled darling; but all the others looked upon him as little better than an idle vagabond, for he had as yet no occupation. He took no especial interest in the family, except occasionally when he wanted them to do something for him. The two girls were very different from each other. Mary was in a chronic state of displeasure with the whole family because they would not sympathize with certain ailments with which, as she maintained, she was afflicted. The rest of the family were bored to death with hearing of these ailments, and Mrs. Markoe was the only one who made the slightest pretence of believing in them. As to Laetitia, she was a good deal sillier than most girls who are just entering society. She would have liked the family well enough if they had not laughed at everything she said. As she could not help talking, she could not escape being laughed at. Such were the terms on which the Markoes were living when John came back among them. What

surprised him was that, when every one was on rather bad terms with every one else, the family as a whole appeared to be getting along pretty well.

After his arrival there ensued a time of perfect harmony between him and the others, a golden age, or, more properly speaking, a golden month. John was given the great spare room only one flight up for his work-room. Here he would shut himself up every morning from breakfast till luncheon time, working hard at his Greek or sitting back in an arm-chair, smoking his long German pipe and thinking. He was preparing a new edition of Aristophanes' "Clouds," with voluminous notes, a vocabulary, and an English translation. He was seldom molested at his work. In the afternoon and evening he saw a good deal of the rest of the family; but he made tremendous efforts not to quarrel with them, and met with considerable success. Ericsson put him up for the Buckingham Club and saw that he was elected, and then let him alone, much to John's satisfaction, for an angel of light could not have lived pleasantly with Ericsson. The family really exerted itself to make the returned wanderer enjoy himself. Walter took him to the theatre several times, and if John always paid for the tickets, it was only because Walter did not happen to have the money with him. Mrs. Markoe told him long stories of things that had occurred at home while he was in Germany. John made every exertion to be uniformly kind and considerate. He even tried to sympathize with Mary's mysterious ailments. She told him flatly that he could not possibly understand them, a statement with which he fully concurred as soon as she began to explain about them. On the whole, however, he and Mary did tolerably well. He

## EXPERIENCE

never laughed at Laetitia like the rest of the family. He tried to observe all Mr. Markoe's rules of behavior and to come down promptly to breakfast. He was very considerate of the family, and, for Markoes, they were very considerate of him. Altogether it was a golden month.

In family life one is judged by a comparative, not a positive standard. Every one wins for himself a certain reputation. He gains the approval or disapproval of others not because his acts are good or bad, but because they are better or worse than they usually are. A meek son creates a dreadful commotion and draws down parental fires of wrath on his head by a few cross words. A fierce, unruly son gains commendation by being less cross than usual. We regard the members of our family as we regard the stocks in which we have invested. We do not care whether they are high or low; the high ones may be lower than when we bought them, and the low ones higher; what we care about is whether they are going up or down.

All this John found out to his cost. Ericsson Markoe behaved like a rather fine-looking, very well combed grizzly bear. When he was touched, he growled and showed his teeth; and so of course no one touched him. John was more like an amiable Newfoundland dog in spectacles, who is fond of children and lets them plague him. I have seen such a dog (without the spectacles) tormented by the hour together. One child blows in his ear, a second sticks burs in his tail, a third combs him with a rake, a fourth lifts him up by his hind legs and makes him walk wheelbarrow. Imagine what would happen if they tried such tricks with the grizzly! Whr-r-r! Click, click, click! Ghoulp, ghoulp! They would all be swal-

lowed in a moment! If Ericsson took a flower from his buttonhole and gave it to his mother, saying: "The stem's broken and I don't want it; I suppose you may as well have it as the scrap basket,"—she would be as much pleased as if John went down town on purpose and brought her home a bouquet. And when John asked if the bread might not be cut a little thinner, it made as much of a commotion as when Ericsson said that the soup was burnt and that he didn't care to eat pig's food, whatever the family liked, and then rose from the table and flung off to the club. One by one the Markoes began to see that John never quarrelled or complained; and one by one they began tentatively to impose upon him. As John was no saint, especially where keeping his temper was concerned, it soon became evident, to him, at least, that there was a line toward which all the Markoes were progressing, and that if any of them crossed the line there would be an explosion. As it happened, Mr. Markoe was the first to cross.

Dictatorial power is apt to be bad for people, and in no case is this better shown than in that of the fathers of families. The father of a family, being a middle-aged or elderly man, usually occupies a high place in his business, whatever it may be. He thus passes half his time in one atmosphere of respect and awe, and the other half in another. In spite of all this, some fathers of families are genial and merry, and as good company as you would wish to meet. Others are so impressed with all the deference paid them, that they think they must have done something to deserve it. Where there is so much smoke, they think there must be considerable of a fire. Then they develop into most intolerably conceited humbugs. They generally say very little, pre-

## EXPERIENCE

sumably because their words are too precious to be wasted. They dole out money to their wives and children as if they were doing a generous action, and accept the recipient's respectful thanks as if they deserved considerable gratitude. They are treated with great consideration by young men visiting the family, and they treat the young men like well-meaning fools. They speak to their grown-up daughters and their friends as if they were children. They occasionally assume a haughty tone toward their wives, apparently so as to make them feel how kind and condescending they usually are to treat them decently. They are at the same time respectable and unbearable.

Mr. Peter Erskine Markoe was, I regret to say, a remarkably fine specimen of the genus which I have just described. I am glad you never heard him lecturing Mary, a woman of thirty, on proper and improper expenditures, when he gave her her monthly allowance; or haughtily reproving his wife because she had bought some wall paper with arsenic in it. I think you could hardly have kept your hands off him. If he ever had the honor of entertaining an eminent specialist at dinner, he usually took the opportunity to state his opinion, always a commonplace one, on the particular matter in which his guest was interested. If the great man replied, even if he completely disproved Mr. Markoe's statements, that gentleman's only rejoinder was to repeat exactly what he had said before. You might as well try to argue with one of Edison's dolls, which can only say one thing. More than once did John see contemptuous smile cross the face of a distinguished visitor as he changed the subject and turned to talk to Mrs. Markoe. Mr. Markoe never noticed such a smile. He was very proud of be-

ing able to upset great men from their own hobbies. If he had ever entertained the Pope of Rome, I don't doubt that he would have stated that he was a Protestant, and given his reasons for it; and that if the Supreme Pontiff had been foolish enough to argue the point, Mr. Markoe would have repeated those reasons till His Holiness had had enough.

Such a man as this and John Markoe were not well calculated to live pleasantly together. John's sharp eyes and clear head could not help detecting how much sense and how much show there was to his father; and when Mr. Markoe made one of his sententious, twice-repeated remarks, John did not know whether he wanted more to laugh or to cry. I suppose that Mr. Markoe must have felt in some dim way that John was critical. He certainly found plenty of other faults in the young Greek scholar. John's bohemian tastes, his abominable clothes, his long hair, his iron-rimmed spectacles, his fondness for staying in bed late, his long German pipe, —all these Mr. Markoe could not away with. At first he treated John with the same deference which he yielded to Ericsson; but mistaking self-control for a mean spirit, as we are all of us apt to do, he began to say unbearable things to John, all of them with reference to the points in which he considered the young man deficient. John displayed great self-command; but he saw, not with unmixed pain, that the time must come when his father and he would have it out. One morning after breakfast, when Mr. Markoe asked him to step into the library to hear something he had to say to him, John felt that the time had come.

When the two were seated, Mr. Markoe coughed and began: "When you first arrived

## EXPERIENCE

from Europe, John, you brought with you some customs and manners which were a constant source of grief to me." Mr. Markoe's speeches sounded like a letter being read aloud. "But your coming," he went on, "was at first so recent that I restrained any comments I might wish to make on these matters. You have now been here a month, and, as the head of the household, I feel it my duty to make some remark upon your peculiarities."

"Do you ever make remarks to Ericsson on his peculiarities?" John asked, with just enough self-control remaining to make him sarcastic and not openly angry. Mr. Markoe smiled superior.

"If you had ever studied law, as I have," he replied, "you would know that it is not considered legal, or at least good etiquette, to wander from the point. What I have to say is briefly this. Your clothes are perfectly shocking, John. No gentleman would be seen in them. And can you not procure some more elegant glasses, that would make you look less like a German professor? These may seem small points, John; but I assure you they annoy me excessively, and I have heard several other persons speak of them. Your mother is in despair because the curtains of your room are so filled with the odor proceeding from that abominable German pipe of yours that she fears the smell can never be removed. I am sorry to criticize the company you keep; but really some of the men you bring to the house are, whatever their mental endowments, positively unpresentable. That Professor Blittersdorf"—

"Look here, father," John broke in, rising, "if you take occasion to allude to one of those subjects again, I'll leave the house in an hour. I'm not dependent on you, I'm thankful to say; and

## UNTAUGHT BY

I'm not going to be treated like a child. You think because I've allowed you to insult me several times without taking any notice of it, that I haven't got any temper. I tell you I have, and that Ericsson and I got it from the same source. Now, I'm going to get out, for if I stay I'll say something I may be sorry for. But there are just two words I've got to say before I go, and those are, Look out!"

And with this theatrical speech John stamped out of the room. The Markoes were always theatrical when they were excited. Mr. Markoe started to rush after his son, but changed his mind, and sat down in a chair to think it all over.

Some men are born debtors. They begin to borrow just as they begin to walk and speak, only with infinitely less effort. They are always in debt, whatever their incomes may be. Such men often have the reputation of being generous, but it is never positively known, for they never have any money to give away. They are in a chronic state of want, not because their incomes are small, but because they consider certain unnecessary things necessary, and these things happen to cost more than they can afford. Other men, who rate their necessities lower, always have money to spare, and are hence looked upon as a natural prey by the born borrowers. This second class of men are usually regarded as a stingy set by the other class, because, though they often lend a great deal, they always draw the line somewhere, whereas the borrowers are not given to drawing lines.

Walter Markoe belonged to the first class; John to the second. When John arrived, Walter, who received from his father an allowance of a hundred dollars a month, owed Mr. Mar-

## EXPERIENCE

koe four hundred dollars, Mrs. Markoe nine hundred, Mary thirteen dollars, Ericsson a hundred and fifty, and Laetitia ninety-five. Before John had been at home three days, Walter had borrowed fifty dollars of him. Two weeks later he borrowed fifty more. Two weeks later he undertook to borrow fifty more; but there was where John drew the line. John had only five hundred dollars left from the thousand that he had earned by tutoring in college before he went to Germany on a fellowship. He had worked too hard for the money to waste it on Walter, and he told Walter so. Walter spoke of repaying it the next month, and John told him he didn't believe he would. Walter went off in a genuine Markoe rage, and henceforward vied with his father in making cutting remarks about John, whether he was present or not. Whatever good taste was lacking in these comments was made up by the strength of the invective.

There are two codes of morals in the world: the code of real morals, and the code of society morals. Some men are good men; others are good fellows. I do not know what the real unpardonable sin is: perhaps there isn't any; but the unpardonable sin of society, by which I mean human intercourse, is talking too much. No tact, no "savoir faire," can defeat the intentions of those who talk too much, if they once get you in their toils. Talking too much is a disease which takes hold of some persons; and, when they are once inoculated, they must talk. Sometimes they really think people want to hear them; at other times they are perfectly conscious that they are talking upon sufferance. In the latter case they perhaps say: "I know you are tired of hearing me talk, but I really must tell you"—and so on. They are perfectly right. They

## UNTAUGHT BY

must tell you ; they cannot help it. They are not wicked. Sometimes they are considerate of their friends in other ways. I do not want to blame them any more than I want to blame a lame man or a victim of smallpox. But I wish some way might be invented for a polite gentleman to escape from them after they have once opened fire upon him.

Mrs. Markoe had early contracted this disease, and was now so far gone that there was no hope of a cure. She was an excellent woman in other respects. In spite of her quick temper and sensitive nerves, she was the one member of the family who tried to keep the others at peace, and who almost never flew out at anything herself. She was closely attached to her husband and children, and was I think the only person in the world who could be said to be really fond of Ericsson. She was not only kind and charitable; she was well read, and possessed excellent abilities. But her passion for talking knew no bounds. In his desire to conciliate the family, John laid himself open to her attacks; and sometimes she talked to him for as much as two hours at a time. Her remarks consisted principally of minute descriptions,—sometimes of her own adventures, sometimes of stories she had heard, sometimes of places, sometimes of books. John tried to give her his complete attention,—and failed; but it made no difference. Mrs. Markoe's perceptions were quick, and she was probably conscious when she was boring her son; but, like the slaves of other bad habits, she could not resist her one great temptation. The other members of the family had some defensive armor. Ericsson would get up and walk out of the room with a smothered imprecation, when his mother said more than a few words

## EXPERIENCE

to him. Walter would yawn out: "Oh, come now, mother, that's enough, you know." Each had his mode of defence except John; but John could not bear to strain the close bonds of affection and intimacy which had always bound him to his mother. So he always treated her with polite consideration, and, as she had no other mark, her whole quiverful of anecdote and conversation was emptied by her sending arrow after arrow at the one person who stood still and let her shoot.

The craving for sympathy is a natural feeling and a laudable one. It is one of the signs of human interdependence. But to exact sympathy and then repay it with a metaphorical slap in the face, is unpardonable. "Sympathize with me." "I do sympathize with you." "No you don't, for you can't, having no conception of what I suffer." But has not the sympathizer a conception of how much the sufferer suffers? Very possibly a juster one than the sufferer himself. The sufferer, feeling his sufferings very present to himself, and seeing that most people do not appear to suffer, jumps to the conclusion that he suffers more than any one else, and hence that he suffers an enormous amount. But the sympathizer, knowing the character of the sufferer and what signs of suffering he gives, and knowing the characters of other sufferers and the signs of suffering they give, is sometimes better fitted to judge impartially. When you are lying down in a meadow, the blade of grass close to your eye appears larger than the great elm tree across the field; but if you shout out that it is larger, a man standing at a distance from both the two plants probably disagrees with you. He is right and you are wrong. Yet you are much more intimately

## UNTAUGHT BY

acquainted with that piece of grass than he is.

John and Mary were sitting together in the parlor one day about two months after John's arrival. Suddenly Mary dropped her embroidery on her lap and put her hand to her forehead.

"Oh, my poor, poor head!" she said.

John looked up from his reading.

"I'm awfully sorry, Mary," said he. "Does it ache very badly?"

"You can have no conception how it aches," Mary replied. "There's a dull, constant, benumbing pain always going on, and then occasional throbs of frightful agony when I feel as if I should die."

"It's too bad," observed John. "I wish I could do something for you. I'm awfully sorry."

"You're not really sorry," said Mary. "No one is. Yesterday Ericsson said he didn't believe I ever had headaches. Then he swore, and said it was all a sham; and I know that you all think so, only you don't say so."

"Indeed I don't think so, Mary. I'm really and truly sorry for you. I've had headaches myself, and I know what they are."

"Know what they are! As if a great strong man like you could realize what a sensitive woman feels! No. I never can get any real sympathy."

"Why, Mary, I'm trying to sympathize with you now."

"Yes, that's just it. You're trying. Sympathy ought to be spontaneous."

"Upon my word, Mary, you're hard to suit."

"There, John, I knew you were only making believe. Now you come out in your true colors. I prefer to have people say what they think, like Ericsson."

## EXPERIENCE

"Well, then, if you want people to say what they think, I'll tell you just what I think. I think you have headaches sure enough, and I think mother has twice as bad ones. I think you make eighteen times as much fuss about them as she does. I think you'd better try to think about what other people are suffering once in a long time. I think you're always trying to make folks pity you,—and when they do, you make them sorry they have. I think I won't trouble you with my sympathy again. That's what I think, as long as you want to know it."

With that he pounded out of the room in true Markoe fashion, while Mary burst into tears.

Laetitia Lydia Markoe was a good illustration of the doctrine of compensations. She was a beauty, and she did not have such a quick temper as her brothers and sisters; but to make up for these advantages, she was the scatter-witted member of the family. Sometimes John thought she had never read a book through. At first he was much surprised to find that she did not know who was vice-president of the United States. Three months later he was astonished when it proved that she did not know who was president. How she had gone through an expensive school without learning anything, he could not imagine; but he realized, on meeting some of her intimate friends, that she was not the only one who managed to do so. Laetitia had an amazing head for modern history of a certain kind: she could tell you just what girls Valentine Riddle had been attentive to, and in what order; and she knew for certain that the rumor that Leonora Vista was engaged was false; but she did not know what the tariff was, or free trade, or home rule; and had never, so far as she remembered, heard of Louis XIV., or Louis XVI., or

## UNTAUGHT BY

Danton, or Robespierre, or Mirabeau. In fact, with a few unimportant exceptions, she knew nothing.

John and she were great friends during that first golden month; and it was his fault that they did not continue to be so. But he could not bear her company,—she was so stupid and so foolish. If she had not been his sister, he could have flirted with her, might have fallen in love with her for aught I know, and all would have been well. As it was, he soon tired of her senseless chatter about Louis this and Cora that and Sadie something else. So he snubbed her once or twice, and she did not bother him again. Poor Laetitia! She was really fond of John, and it went to her poor little frivolous heart when she saw that he thought her shallow and stupid. Once she actually went into the library and brought thence a serious book to read it; but before she had finished two pages, Belle Winter came in, and the book was forgotten in the delights of an elaborate account of Irene Hunt's wedding dress.

It was in January, three months after John's arrival, that Miss Marion Quinlan Markoe, Mr. Markoe's sister, came on from Boston to spend two months with her brother's family. She was small and dark, with a very sharp tongue and with small blackeyes, like John's, that could see a great deal. John was turned out of the spare room for her benefit; and the offending curtains were thoroughly aired.

"Come, John," she said, as the two were sitting in what was now her room, an hour after her arrival, "tell me all about the family. How do you get on with them?"

John smiled sadly. "I don't get on with them," he replied.

## EXPERIENCE

"Well, of course you don't get on with Ericsson," Miss Markoe resumed cheerfully. "You might as well try to get on with a wild bull of Bashan. But your mother, now, or Laetitia, or even your father? Can't you manage it?"

John shook his head. Miss Markoe did not say anything more for some time, but sat with her little head on her little hand. When she spoke, it was without her usual animation.

"You'd better go away from here, John. There's no use trying. Seven grown men and women can't be happy in the same house, especially if they're Markoes; and now that I've come, there'll be eight of us."

"Oh, but you'll help, not hinder, Aunt Marion."

"I don't know that, child. I'm as bad as the rest of you. No, John, you'll be quarreling with me yourself before a month is past. Yes, you will,—I know it. Can't you go somewhere? Don't any of the colleges want Greek professors?"

"I had two or three chances in the autumn; but I wanted to finish my book; and besides"—he smiled as he went on—"I thought I should like to be with the family for a while."

"Oh, foolish, foolish John! Now promise me you'll take the first chance you get."

"No, Aunt Marion, I won't promise. I think I shall do better with the family,—all but Ericsson,—although Heinrich Knobelsdorf wrote to me just what you have said."

"John, I won't take No for an answer. You see we're quarreling already. As to that Kummelsdorf, I wish I knew him. He evidently knows what he's talking about in spite of his idiotic name."

It was amusing and sad at the same time to see how soon Miss Markoe's prediction that she

## UNTAUGHT BY

and John would quarrel was verified. Miss Marion never could abide her sister-in-law with her power of endless talking. Families are always trying to make relations-in-law into blood relations, and are always failing. Mrs. Markoe happened to observe that she did not think it necessary to make a dinner call within a week. Miss Markoe said that no lady would omit doing so. The obvious inference was that Mrs. Markoe was not a lady. John opened fire on his mother's behalf, and he and his aunt delivered broadside after broadside at each other. They made it up afterward; but as Miss Marion had remarked, she was no better than the other Markoes. She used to have long conversations with John, in which she pointed out to him the failings of each member of the family; and, worse than that, she drew him on into similar petty invectives. He heartily wished she was back again in Boston.

In spite of the fact that John irritated most of his family and that they all irritated him, he was fond of them all, except perhaps Ericsson; and his affection for them made his life at home all the harder to bear. He could with difficulty endure his father's politely calling his mother a fool, as he did perhaps five times a day. "My dear, your views on civil service reform are exactly what I should expect from a woman." After such a speech Ericsson would quit for a moment his habitual look of displeasure, and laugh loudly, while John would just manage to restrain himself from throwing a plate at his father's head. Walter's insulting jokes and laughter when Mary spoke of her ailments were equally unpleasant to listen to. John thought seriously of giving Walter a sound thrashing

## EXPERIENCE

one day when the young fellow had been especially ungentlemanly; but, as Walter was much larger and stronger than he, he relinquished the idea, realizing the truth of the couplet:

"Johnny wouldn't  
'Cause he couldn't."

Another thing that led all his better feelings to revolt was the really cruel way in which the family treated Laetitia. Walter and Ericsson and Mr. Markoe vied with each other in exposing the poor child's signorance, and then laughing at it. John tried to defend her several times, but he merely enlarged the fight and failed to stop it. Finally he gave up interfering. Only when Laetitia left the table crying, as she sometimes did, he would go after her and try to comfort her by abusing her tormentors.

One day, when John came down to breakfast late, as usual, he found the family in an unwonted state of quiet, which he foolishly mistook for peace. It was in reality one of the pauses which were apt to ensue after an especially brutal remark of Ericsson's. The various members of the party happened to be characteristically occupied. Walter was emptying a silver pitcher of maple syrup on his griddle cakes. There were tears in Laetitia's great blue eyes, a sufficient evidence to show who was the recipient of Ericsson's last piece of politeness. Mr. Markoe was stirring his coffee and looking very wise. Mrs. Markoe was glancing about the table to see if there was not something that somebody wanted, and talking to herself. Ericsson was scowling at the newspaper. Mary had one hand upon her forehead, while with the other she dropped some medicine into a wine-glass. Miss Marion was sitting bolt upright, looking at every one at the same time.

## UNTAUGHT BY

Mrs. Markoe glanced up at John and smiled when he came in.

"How was the Professor's Club last night, John?" she inquired. "My father always used to say that he found it the most enjoyable of the clubs. It was"—

"I thought you wanted John to tell about it," growled Ericsson.

"Don't interrupt, Ericsson," said Aunt Marion intrepidly. "What were you saying, Lydia?"

But Mrs. Markoe did not come to her rescuer's assistance. "I'm afraid I don't remember," she said nervously.

Ericsson laughed his great, brutal laugh. "Why, you talk so little, I should think you'd remember, mother," he observed. "As to your remark, Aunt Marion, I'm not learning lessons in manners just at present."

"No," said Aunt Marion, sipping her coffee, "and you never did, and never will."

Ericsson brought his fist down on the table with a bang. "Father, how many times are you going to let Aunt Marion insult me at your table?" he inquired fiercely.

Mr. Markoe looked from one to the other with a bewildered air. "Come, come, this will never do," he said.

"Marion, you didn't mean anything, I'm sure. You don't object to apologizing, do you?"

Miss Marion kept on sipping her coffee. "Not a bit," she said. "Ericsson, I humbly apologize for ever having thought you were a gentleman. John, kindly stand by me if your brother undertakes to knock me down."

Ericsson rose to his feet. "Look here, father!" he cried, "either Aunt Marion or I leave the house to-morrow! Which shall it be?"

"Oh, Ericsson!" Mrs. Markoe broke in, with

## EXPERIENCE

tears in her eyes. "Don't talk like that, my dear. Remember that you're speaking to a lady. I'm sure your aunt didn't mean to vex you. I'm sure"—

"That's right; talk, talk, talk, mother! That'll settle everything," said Ericsson, glad to find a weaker antagonist than the redoubtable Miss Marion.

There was a short pause, and Laetitia took advantage of it.

"I wish some one would suggest what I'm to wear at the Renaissance ball," she said. "I don't know exactly what to wear. Would it be all right to appear as Cassandra?"

"That's a good idea," said Mr. Markoe. "Or you might try Martha Washington."

"Or Charlotte Corday, or Lot's wife," suggested Mary.

"Or Mrs. Grover Cleveland!" shouted Walter.

"But she didn't live at the right time, did she?" asked poor Laetitia, her eyes gradually filling with tears.

"Why don't you go as Dante's Beatrice, or as Isabella of Castile?" suggested John kindly.

"Now you're making fun of me, too!" said Laetitia, rising and leaving the table. "I don't believe there were such people!"—and in watery indignation, pursued by shouts of laughter, she made her way to her room.

Things grew worse and worse, till at last they were fairly insupportable. Every time that John made up his mind anew that he would be patient, and if possible agreeable, he was vanquished either by a flow of conversation from his mother, a complaint from Mary, a reproof from his father, or an insult from Walter. Instead of becoming more patient, he found that he was growing less

## UNTAUGHT BY

so. As every day went by he felt that he could not spend another twenty-four hours in the house. He often began a day by feeling that he had thought too hardly of his family; he generally ended it by feeling that he had not thought hardly enough of them. He took to looking over Knobelsdorf's letter, and thinking that there was a good deal of truth in it; and he began to wonder where he would go if he went away from Philadelphia.

It was in the early part of February that he definitely gave up the fight and determined to leave home as soon as possible. A number of incidents occurring in rapid succession hastened his conclusion. He had a stormy interview with Walter, who absolutely refused to give back the money he had borrowed, on the ground that he had none. Mr. Markoe read John a severe lecture on the lazy life he was leading. John replied that he was working five times as hard as his father was,—which was not true, for both were in reality hard workers. One morning when John came in to breakfast he heard his mother say: "I think John is a perfect gentleman!" The loud chorus of laughs and jeers which greeted this remark showed that the other members of the family were not of her opinion. That very evening when John came from the club he found a special delivery letter awaiting him. It was dated at a large western university, and read as follows:

MR. JOHN P. MARKOE:

Dear Sir,—Our instructor in Greek is dangerously ill, and we have no one to take his place. I understand that you are not now actively occupied. The faculty wishes to know if you cannot take the place for the rest of the year and help us out. I know that your education, reputation, and talents justify you in looking for something higher; but our present Greek professor, Mr. Calthrop, is thinking of resigning from his position next summer (please do not mention the circumstance); and if you become acquainted with the work being done, I don't see, though of course I cannot promise, why you may not hope

## EXPERIENCE

to occupy his place. Your salary for the rest of this year will be a hundred and fifty dollars a month.

Write me an answer immediately, or better, telegraph that you are coming, and start right away.

Hoping for a favorable reply, I am

Very truly yours,

SAMUEL B. CONWAY, President.

Three months before, John would have refused an instructorship with scorn. Now he would have hugged the letter, if it had been big enough. He went immediately to the telegraph office and despatched his answer. When he came home, he got out his trunk and packed it, although he usually deferred his packing till the last moment. He wanted to feel that he was really going to start the next morning. When he went to bed, he was as happy as a boy of eighteen who was to begin his college career the next day. In the morning, when he was half through his breakfast, he suddenly turned to his father.

"You know you said the other day that you didn't think I was working hard enough, father," he said.

"Yes, yes, I do recollect that I made some such observation, and that you"—

"Well, never mind that. I've no doubt I was very rude and impolite. But what I want to say is that I'm going to start this morning for Dillingham University in Nebraska, where I'm going to teach Greek till June."

Every one opened his eyes wide. Even Ericsson looked up from his paper with a questioning scowl.

"Why, my dear boy!" exclaimed Mrs. Markoe, who usually found her tongue as soon as the next one, "why didn't you tell us before? Half your things are in the wash, but then I suppose we can telegraph them"—

"I think John has the floor, as we used to

## UNTAUGHT BY

say at the State House," Mr. Markoe observed.

"I'm afraid I must be going," said John, looking at his watch. "I should have told you before, mother; but I didn't know until after you had gone to bed. Good-bye, father! Good-bye mother! Good-bye, every one!"

"Good-bye, my boy. I trust you won't be so remiss in letter writing as when you were abroad."

"Good-bye, my dear, dear child! I can't bear to have you leave us. Do be careful about"—

"That'll do, Lydia. He can't hear what you're saying. Good-bye, John! You're well out of this hornet's nest."

"John, as you go, would you mind stopping at the apothecary's and telling him to send up another box of quinine pills?"

"Brace up with this idiotic leave-taking, John, or you'll lose your train."

"I saw you left your meerschaum pipe, John. Can I use it while you're gone?"

"Why, John, Cora Sanderson's going on the same train. You can talk to her all the way to Pittsburg."

Time passed slowly at Dillingham University. John had several enlivening disputes with the head of his department, Professor Calthrop, as to the meaning of some Homeric appellatives, but the professor was a Greek student of the old school, and Markoe hardly considered him worth fighting. John had his freedom, and enjoyed it at first: his life reminded him of his life at Halle; but he missed the Professors' Club at Philadelphia. He missed Knobelsdorf, too; and often, as he sat at work late into the night, he would look up almost hoping to see Heinrich's honest face bending over a book at the other side of the table, partly obscured by a great beer

## EXPERIENCE

mug which the young German always kept in front of him. John did not write home regularly: he never had done so; but he did occasionally, —and he received a scattering line of letters in reply.

1225 HEMLOCK ST., PHILADELPHIA,  
March 6, 1891.

Dear John:

I want to tell you about the absurd time we had here last night. . .

Do you know that this ridiculous family, or rather some of them, are already pretending that they miss you? Your mother I think perhaps really does, though I never listen to her long rigmaroles, and she may be cursing you for aught I know. But you ought to see Mary! She says the shock of your going was as if something had strained up her nerves very tight and then suddenly loosed them. I wish she'd try us with the shock of her departure. To hear the family conversation, any one would think that you had been a kind of cherub that every one doted on. The Honorable Father Peter, while rebuking poor little Laetitia, intimated that you might not have gone away if she had been able to talk more reasonably!

Here I go, slandering them all. Very likely they're all pitching into me in their letters to their "dear John." I wish I could see some of those documents!

Your foolish old

AUNT MARION.

Dear John:

I'm awfully sorry you went away—and I hope it was not at all because I was such a little fool—at least every one says I am.

Robbert Enfield came yesterday afternoon and took me to drive in his spider phaeton—I had to look up that word in the dictionary—with two of the SWEETEST little sorel horses you ever saw! Mamma said it was all right because, you know, he's our third cousin.

I'm going to be Romola at the Renaissance ball. Ericsson said he didn't believe I knew who she was. I said yes I did—she was an Italian—so he got left. I knew because Romola sounded like Rome.

Your affectionate little sister,

LAETITIA.

1225 HEMLOCK ST., PHILADELPHIA, PA.

My dear son John:

. . . and should you go to Lincoln, be sure to call on the governor. When you tell him whose son you are, I think you will find that I am not wholly unknown to him.

We all miss you, myself most of all. I was quite mortified last night. We had Prof. Longfield at dinner (the celebrated chemist, as you are, I presume, aware), and as he was very silent I was obliged to take most of the conversation upon myself. The talk, out of compliment to our visitor, naturally turned on chemistry, and I am thankful to say I was competent to make a few observations on the subject, as I took a course in that study when I was in Cambridge. If you had been with us, you might have drawn the professor out. Ericsson, as you know, has some sense, but is—what shall I say?—hardly sympathetic

## UNTAUGHT BY

Trusting to see you at Mt. Desert in the now fast approaching summer, I am

Your affectionate parent,  
PETER ERSKINE MARKOE.

PHILADELPHIA, Thursday.

My own dear boy:

I miss you every hour, every minute of the day, and I hope you think sometimes of your poor old mother. I am counting the days until summer comes and . . .

I sat up a good deal last night with poor dear Mary who has had another of her ill turns. The poor dear child, I sometimes suspect that she isn't quite so ill as she thinks she is, but probably I am wrong. At any rate it is hardly the part of a mother to think so . . .

I must tell you about the Renaissance ball. Laetitia was lovely. It was magnificent, and I must go quite into detail about . . .

I almost think Robert Enfield means something by his attentions to Laetitia. I know you hate gossip, but I **MUST** tell you what Mrs. Ingersoll said about . . .

Dear me! Here are twenty-seven closely written pages! But before I close I want to tell you what . . .

There! I must stop. Good by, dear boy!

Your lovingly affectionate and devoted

MOTHER.

PHILADELPHIA.

Dear John:

There was the devil of a row at the club last night. Monty Everett struck Ericsson in the head, and old Rick turned on him and hit him about ten blows in succession—good hard ones—you know the kind. Monty was paralyzed and fell on the floor and couldn't stir. I guess he wont tackle Rick again in a hurry. Rick was nearly arrested, but the fellows hushed the thing up. I think the trouble was that Rick called Monty a blackleg and a swindler or something.

Things are pretty slow here. There isn't much to tell.

Bob Enfield seems to be kind of stuck on Lydia.

How do you like Dillingham? We all miss you like thunder—honestly.

By the way, can't you possibly lend me fifty more. My club assessment's due in two weeks, and I haven't got a cent. I'll pay you next month, or half of it, anyway.

Your affectionate brother,  
WALTER ANDERSON MARKOE.

PHILADELPHIA, April 14.

Dear John:

I am dictating this to Laetitia, as you will see by the handwriting, for my right hand is so closely bound up in bandages that I cannot write. Yesterday a considerable swelling and redness appeared on my middle finger, and as it seemed to grow larger, I feared it might grow into a felon. I sent to my new doctor, Dr. Busnach, and he did up my hand for me. It is something of a trial not to be able to write or sew.

I write to congratulate you on your birthday, which mamma says is on the eighteenth. It is a great trial for me to have you away, for I think you are the only member of the family who really sympathizes with my sufferings, though your blunt manners often make it seem otherwise.

## EXPERIENCE

Walter has become much more insulting since you left us. He was more afraid to be rude when you were here. Now he is unbearable. I sometimes wonder if courtesy to ladies—I have given up hoping for sympathy—has entirely gone out of fashion.

My headache bids me end. I wonder that it has let me do so much. Letty, too, complains of a headache, but you know what the aches and pains of the hale and strong are to those of the invalid.

I have just been revising this myself. Letty had spelt "sympathizes" "simpathyzes." This is written with my left hand.

Your affectionate sister,

MARY MARKOE.

MAY 1.

Dear John:

This is to tell you that I'm engaged to Rose Wainright.

Yours,

ERICSSON MARKOE.

These letters had a good deal of effect on John. Not that they altered his opinion of his family; on the contrary, to his almost morbidly acute powers of judging character each letter was a window through which he could see the writer and all his peculiarities. But the letters persuaded him, what he was often inclined to doubt when he was staying at home, that the family was really fond of him. This made a great change in his thoughts. Good qualities which had hitherto been partially concealed, perhaps only by bad manners or unfortunate habits, appealed to him now that he was half the width of the continent away. He had not known what to expect when he was in Germany, and he had painted too rosy a picture of his family and their family life. If he should ever live at home again, he would know just what to expect, and taking each member of the family circle as he was, need never be disappointed. In Philadelphia he had thought of his talkative mother as a person who talked too much. In Dillingham he thought of her as his mother.

Perhaps John would have been happier at Dillingham if he had been at a good boarding house; but with a characteristic recklessness he

## UNTAUGHT BY

had agreed to room and board for the remainder of the year at an establishment where the food was uninteresting and the company uncongenial. He could not help looking back with some regret to the eatables at 1225 Hemlock Street, where Ericsson's brutal comments kept everything up to a high grade of excellence. John had a small room, too, so small that he had to keep it in some degree of order, and could not toss about his books and papers into the delightful confusion that had characterized his room in Philadelphia. He was not at all sorry when recitations ended and examinations began. Several days before the end of the term he wrote a letter to Heinrich Knobelsdorf. Two weeks later Heinrich sat back in the big armchair of his father's study at Nuremberg and opened it. It read as follows:

DILLINGHAM, NEB., June 5, 1891.

Dear Heinrich:

Forgive me for not writing in German; but I have lots to say, and I can't bother with your confounded Umlauts and Handschrift and the Lord knows what.

It would make you laugh to see the letters I have received from my family since I came out here to Dillingham. You would think that they all doted on me. You can judge from my letter of some months ago (which I think was a trifle exaggerated) that they were not quite so fond of me when I was with them. Yet now Mary has found out that I am the only person who really appreciates her sufferings. If it is so, I tremble to think what a contempt others must have for her trials. Meanwhile father lets me know that he misses my sympathetic personality as an entertainer of his guests, while Walter honors me with a request for fifty dollars, though only three short months ago he assured me that I was so mean about money matters that he would never borrow from me again.

And yet, Heinrich,—I know you won't like what I'm going to say, but I may as well be frank with you,—and yet, I think I misjudged my family while I was with them. Things at home seem brighter when you look at them from such God-forsaken surroundings as I am now blessed with. Mother, at least, is, I am sure, as affectionate and self-denying as an epicure in mothers could ask for; and if ever I have been irritated with her, I fear the fault has been more mine than hers. Laetitia, too,—I wish you could see her letter. A more loving little sister doesn't exist. And the others—I don't mean that they're perfect: I know what they are well enough; but why should they be perfect? I'm not. If I had only been willing to take them as they were, as I should another time! Even Ericsson is well enough,

## EXPERIENCE

if you keep out of his way: and besides, he's going to be married now. I was always looking for qualities in them which they didn't possess. One doesn't gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles, nor good manners of Ericssons, nor politeness of Walters. I don't see why anything a person says or does should irritate you, if you know he's the kind of person who says or does things like that, and prepare yourself accordingly.

You remember that in my last letter to you I agreed in the main with your conclusions as to the undesirability of a number of grown people living together. But three months of life in a prairie college have changed my ideas. Did it ever strike you that your view of the case was a rather selfish one? For a man to leave his own family and go off to live alone somewhere, just so that their blunders and foolishness sha'n't jar on his delicate sensibilities, seems to me pretty near the essence of selfishness. And you live at home yourself! True, you have only a father and a mother. But why should I not exert myself to keep the peace between the discordant elements of my unfortunate family, instead of leaping among the others, as I fear I did last year, like a newspaper dropped on a wood fire?

With all this in view, I intend to spend this summer with the family, and also next winter, unless I have some much more desirable position than this one offered me. I am quite certain that I shall be able to get on very nicely with them this time.

I have a kind of presentiment that I have not been able to convince you. You never have approved of me when I did anything silly,—I did not mean to write that word, but I scorn to scratch it out,—what I mean is vacillating. To conclude, I have made up my mind, and I hope you can bring yourself to agree with me.

Always your friend,

JOHN PETERSON MARKOE.

Heinrich finished the letter and then tore it into fragments.

"Fool!" he muttered, stamping on the floor so that the room shook.

## A BRICK BLOCK

Eight small brick houses, standing side by side,  
Eight flights of steps, narrow and long and  
steep;

Different dimensions: all nineteen feet wide;  
Some forty-two, some forty-three feet deep.  
Each with a curved bow-window and a dome;  
So much alike that children in their doubt  
Must count, poor things, to know which house  
is home!

A curious thing to write a poem about!

And yet, inside, are men as wise as we.

And happy, though with little cause for mirth.  
To each, his nineteen feet by forty-three  
Seems the important corner of the earth.

Each has his secret tears, his open jest:

Each has his pride in the brick cell he calls  
His Home, and, somehow, knows it from the  
rest.

Those narrow rooms are his ancestral halls—  
His little universe within four walls.

These men give plays, lifelike beyond belief,  
Whose actors really live and really die,

So full of nonsense, and so full of grief,

One scarcely knows whether to laugh or cry.

Here some Antonio mourns his unpaid debt;

There a real Shylock counts his darling  
hoards.

Here a real Romeo sighs for Juliet.

Think what great sights this little block  
affords.

Eight first-class Shakespeare's plays are on  
the boards!

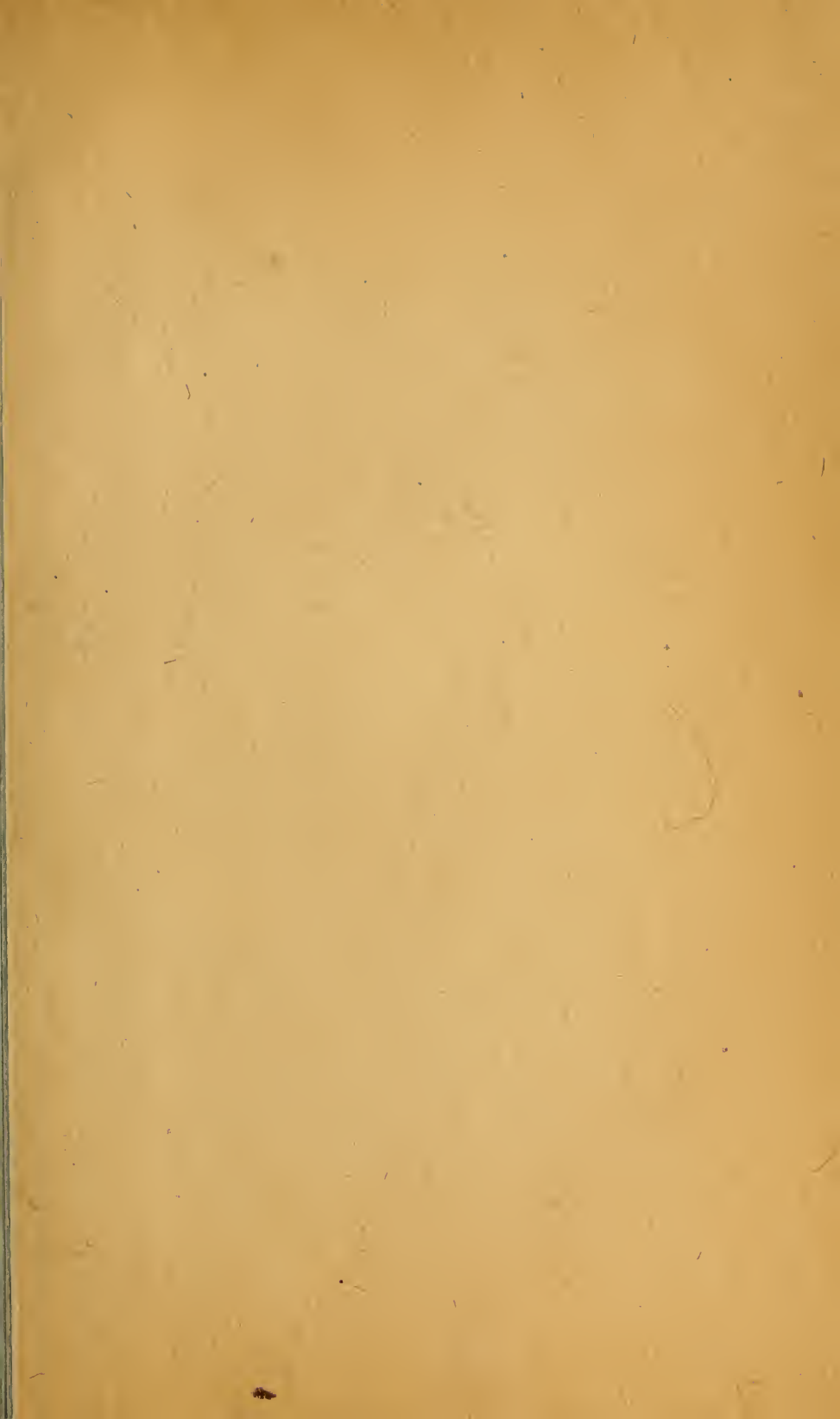
The lover cannot see. His dancing eyes  
Detect no fault, no ugliness, no sin;  
His sweetheart's house seems fair as Paradise  
Because he knows his sweetheart is within.  
I too am growing blind. I cannot see  
The ugly house-front or the narrow stair.  
Those unknown friends are very dear to me,  
And, as I gaze across the dingy square,  
Eight homes of those I love are standing there.



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